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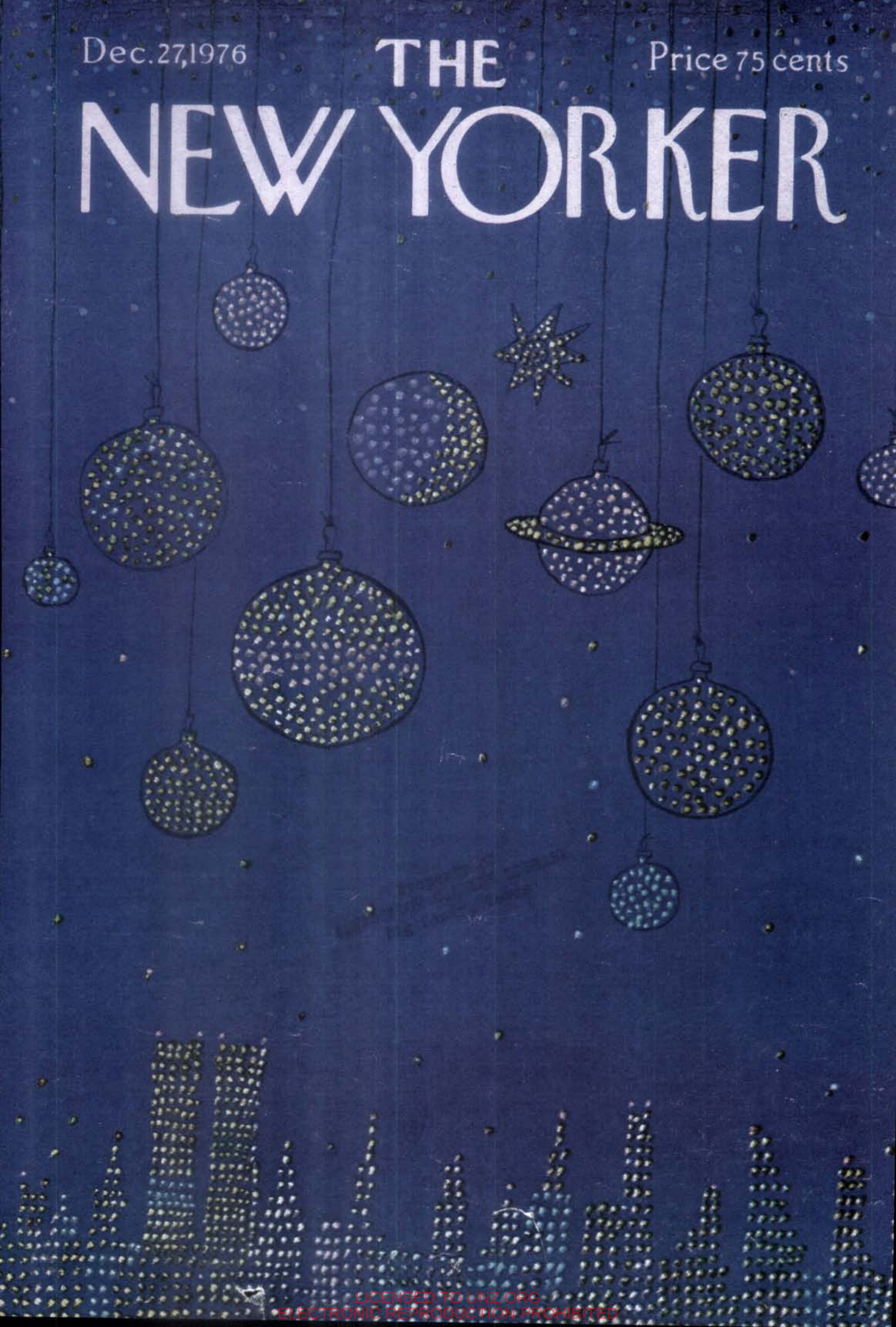

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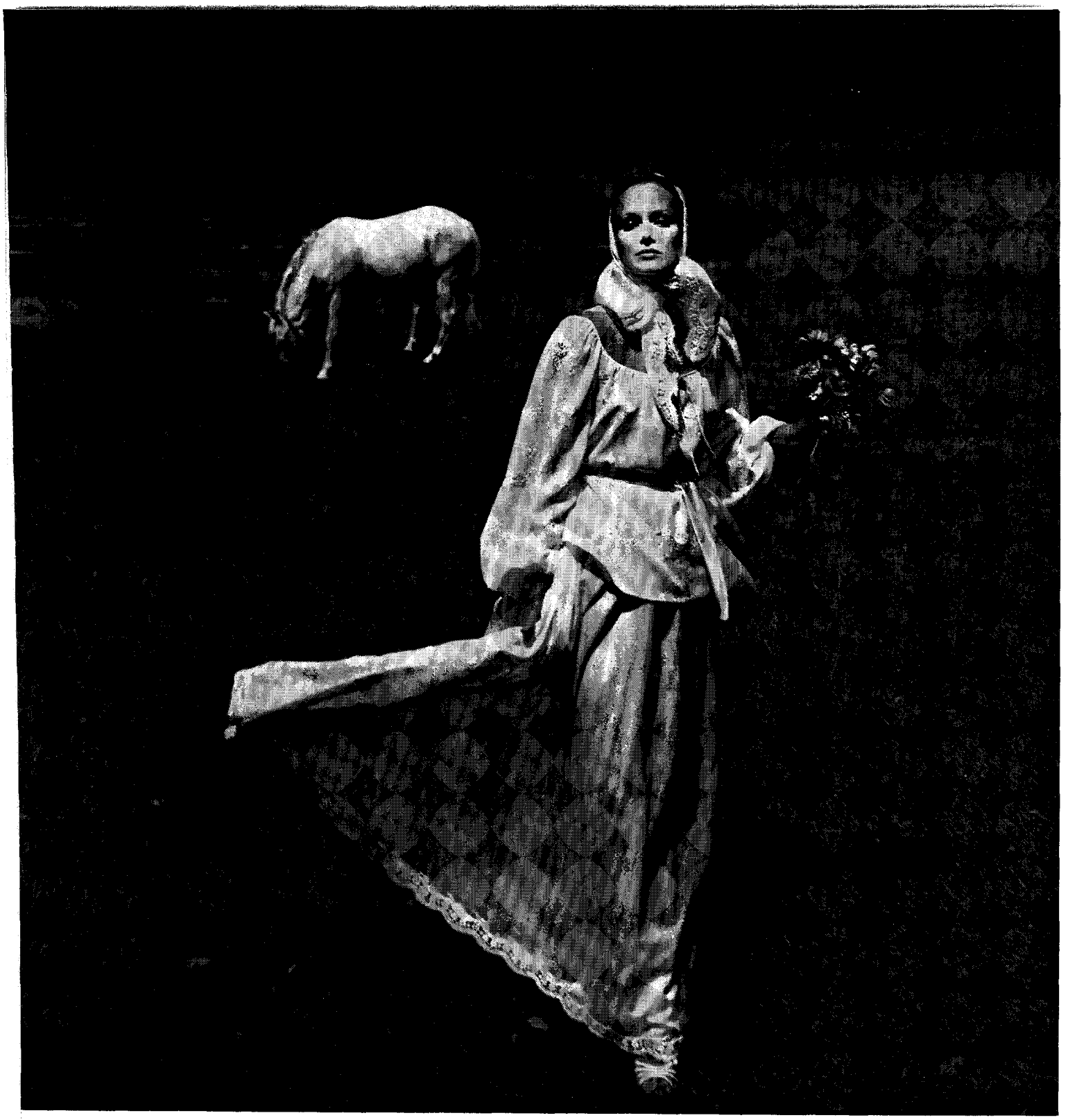

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

A CONSCIENTIOUS CALENDAR OF EVENTS OF INTEREST

THE THEATRE

(This week and next, some theatres, as indicated below, are rearranging their schedules because of Christmas and New Year's Day. There may be further changes, so it would be wise to check with the newspapers before making plans.)

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

Ashes—This British import by David Rudkin tells of the unsuccessful efforts of a most engaging young couple first to conceive a child and later to adopt one—a sad situation, indeed, but an exhilarating play, for Mr. Rudkin is a true dramatist, who writes with feeling, wit, and style. The performances of Brian Murray and Roberta Maxwell as the husband and wife, and of John Tillinger and Penelope Allen as an assortment of other characters, are as close to perfection as makes no matter. Lynne Meadow is the excellent director. (Manhattan Theatre Club, *321 E. 73rd St. 472-0600.* Tuesdays through Thursdays, and Saturdays and Sundays, at 7:30. Closes Sunday, Jan. 2.)

The Brownsville Raid—Charles Fuller's strong, tragic drama (with considerable comedy and mystery as well) is based on an actual event—the dishonorable discharge, by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1906, of three companies of crack, experienced black troops for purportedly shooting up the town of Brownsville, Texas. This production celebrates the tenth birthday of the Negro Ensemble Company, and Douglas Turner Ward, its artistic director, appears in the leading role. With Bill Cobbs and Graham Brown, among other good actors. (Theatre de Lys, *121 Christopher St. 924-8782.* Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 8:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays at 3:30 and Sundays at 2:30.)

California Suite—Four sketches about the occupants (at different times) of Suite 203 at the Beverly Hills Hotel. Tammy Grimes, George Grizzard, Jack Weston, and Barbara Barrie are all excellent, and Neil Simon is as witty as ever. (Eugene O'Neill, *230 W. 49th St. 246-0220.* Nightly at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2; special matinée Sunday, Dec. 26, at 3.)

The Club—Eve Merriam's musical entertainment is set in a gentlemen's club in 1903, but the company consists of seven women, lightly disguised in top hats, white tie, and tails, who sing and dance to authentic, indelicate songs of the period. As feminist projects go, this one is unusually good-humored, and the performance—the singing, and especially the dancing—under Tommy Tune's direction is proficient and enlivening. (Circle in the Square Downtown, *159 Bleecker St. 254-6330.* Mondays through Thursdays and Christmas Eve at 8; Saturdays and New Year's Eve at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Comedians—An English playwright, Trevor Griffiths, tells a sad and funny story about some working-class men who are hoping to become professional standup comics. The odds, we see, are strongly against them. Milo O'Shea and Jonathan Pryce head an excellent cast, and Mike Nichols has directed with his usual acuteness and suavity. (Music Box, *239 W. 45th St. 246-4636.* Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Fiddler on the Roof—Zero Mostel in a limited engagement of a revival of the Stein-Bock-Harnick musical. Directed by Jerome Robbins. Preview Monday, Dec. 27. Opens officially on Tuesday, Dec. 28. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 245-4878. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8; opening-night curtain at 8:30. Matinées Wednesdays, except Dec. 29, and Saturdays at 2; special matinée Thursday, Dec. 30.)

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For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide: When the Rainbow Is Enuf—The marvellous poems and prose of an American writer, Ntozake Shange, are spoken and danced to by seven remarkably gifted young black women. The result is an evening of great beauty, humor, and dramatic strength, for which the director, Oz Scott, must be given high credit. Choreography by Paula Moss, who, along with the author, appears on the stage. (Booth, *222 W. 45th St. 246-5969.* Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sunday, Dec. 26, at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays, except Christmas, at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Guys and Dolls—A satisfactory production of this sturdy old warhorse of a musical. It is neither improved nor marred by the absurdity of its having an all-black cast. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. CI 7-7260. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays, except Christmas, at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat—Cleavon Little heads the cast in a musical (based on the Old Testament story) with a book, music, and lyrics by Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber, imported from London. Directed by Frank Dunlop. Previews through Wednesday, Dec. 29. Opens officially on Thursday, Dec. 30, and will run through Sunday, Jan. 9. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 636-4100. Wednesday and Thursday, Dec. 22-23, at 8; Christmas Eve at 6:30; Christmas and Sunday, Dec. 26, at 2 and 8; Tuesday through Thursday, Dec. 28-30, at 7; and Friday, Dec. 31, and New Year's Day at 2 and 8.)

Lincoln—A play by Saul Levitt, with a single actor, Fritz Weaver, and videotape background. (Theatre Four, *424 W. 55th St. 246-8545.* Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays at 2 and Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, Jan. 2.)

Music Is—A musical with a book, based on Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night," by George Abbott, a score by Richard Adler, lyrics by Will Holt, and a cast headed by Christopher Hewett. Directed by Mr. Abbott. (St. James, *246 W. 44th St. 695-5858.* Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

The Night of the Iguana—Tennessee Williams on youth, age, sex, and death. An imperfect but very interesting play, in a satisfactory production. In the cast are Richard Chamberlain, Sylvia Miles, Dorothy McGuire, and William Roerick. Settings by H. R. Poindexter and direction by Joseph Hardy. (Circle in

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

the Square, Broadway at 50th St. 581-0720. *Nightly, except Mondays and Christmas, at* 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays, except Christmas, at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Oh! Calcutta!—A collection of short sketches that purport to give us a refreshing view of sex and do not. (Edison, 240 W. 47th St. 757-7164. Wednesday, Dec. 22, at 2 and 8; Thursday, Dec. 23, and Christmas at 8; Sunday, Dec. 26, at 3 and 7; Monday and Tuesday, Dec. 27-28, at 8; Wednesday, Dec. 29, at 3 and 8; Thursday, Dec. 30, at 8; New Year's Eve at 7:30 and 10; and New Year's Day at 8.

Poor Murderer—A drama embracing a psychodrama, in which a bright young man in a mental hospital acts out a murder that he may or may not have committed. The cast is sensational: Laurence Luckinbill, Maria Schell, Kevin McCarthy, Ruth Ford, Larry Gates, Paul Sparer. Written by Pavel Kohout and directed by Herbert Berghof. (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 246-0390. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Porgy and Bess—Gershwin's irresistible opera, played and sung for the first time as he wrote it. (Mark Hellinger, 237 W. 51st St. 757-7064. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

The Rehearsal; or, Love's Reward—Philip Kerr is very good as an embittered, profligate drunk in an otherwise deplorable revival of Jean Anouilh's play. (Roundabout Stage Two, 307 W. 26th St. 924-7160. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays at 2.)

The Robber Bridegroom—A musical that pretends, not very successfully, to be a mingling of country humor and age-old folklore. The cast is pleasing, and the dancing is first-rate. (Biltmore, 261 W. 47th St. 582-5340. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Sexual Perversity in Chicago and **Duck Variations**—David Mamet's pair of truly funny comedies, each of them with an undercurrent of sadness. They had a short run Off Off Broadway a year ago. The first deals, in scenes as brief as blackouts, with the fragile affair between a couple of innocents who are all but shredded by their former homosexual partners. The second is, strictly speaking, a poem in the guise of the desultory, meandering conversation of two old Jewish men pottering around a park bench. Albert Takazauckas directed the capable cast. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020. Saturdays at 7 and 10, and Sundays and Thursday and Friday, Dec. 30-31, at 8. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Sly Fox—A superb comedy, which Larry Gelbart has erected upon the skeleton of Jonson's "Volpone." The almost perfect cast is headed by George C. Scott and includes Jack Gilford, Bob Dishy, Gretchen Wyler, Hector Elizondo, John Heffernan, and James Gallery. The gorgeous settings are by George Jenkins, and the direction is by Arthur Penn. (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 247-0472. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Streamers—This play, set in an Army barracks in Virginia in 1965, completes David Rabe's trilogy on the Vietnam war. Though not quite up to Mr. Rabe's "Pavlo Hummel," on the same theme, it is very strong. The production, under Mike Nichols' direction, is excellent, with especially good performances by Peter Evans and Terry Alexander. There is considerable onstage bloodshed. (Newhouse, 150 W. 65th St. 787-8080. Nightly, except Mondays and Christmas Eve, at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:30, and Sundays at 3.)

The Threepenny Opera—A superior production of the Brecht-Weill musical, in an accurate translation of the harsh-voiced original. Philip Bosco is the dreaded Captain Macheath, and Ellen Greene is his faithful, traitorous Jenny. (Vivian Beaumont, 150 W. 65th St. 787-8080. Nightly, except Mondays and Christmas Eve, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

A Tribute to Lili Lamont—An old, down-at-heels movie star meets her fan club. Star and members are all freaks and, what is worse, retreads. In short, rubbish about rubbish. Leueen MacGrath, in the title role, deserves

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better than this. (Circle Repertory Company, 99 Seventh Ave. S., at Sheridan Sq. 924-7100. Tuesdays through Fridays, except Christmas Eve, at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Sundays at 3. Special performance Sunday, Dec. 26, at 7. Closes Sunday, Jan. 2.)

Women Behind Bars—A revival of the Tom Eyen comedy, set in the old Women's House of Detention in the Village. (Truck and Warehouse Theatre, 79 E. 4th St. 777-0140. Mondays through Thursdays at 8; Fridays, except Christmas Eve, at 9; Saturdays at 8 and 10:30; and Sundays at 8. Matinées Sundays at 4.)

Your Arms Too Short to Box with God—A musical taken from the Book of Matthew by Vinnette Carroll, who also directed. The music and lyrics are by Alex Bradford and Micki Grant, and the cast includes Salome Bey, Delores Hall, and William Hardy, Jr. Opens Wednesday, Dec. 22, at 6:45. (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. JU 2-3897. Tuesdays through Saturdays, except Christmas Eve, at 8, and Sundays at 7; on New Year's Eve at 7 and 10. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

Long Runs—Bubbling Brown Sugar: Harlem in the twenties, when it was part of the night-club merry-go-round. A scrapbook of great songs and lively dancing by a cast both old and young. (ANTA Theatre, 245 W. 52nd St. 246-6270. Tuesdays through Saturdays, except Christmas Eve, at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Wednesdays at 2 and Sundays at 2:30.)... **Chicago:** Purportedly about some tough folk in the Windy City in the twenties. A musical that defies even the great Bob Fosse to make it merry. (46th Street Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. 246-4271. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)... **A Chorus Line:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. A brilliant, innovative musical, conceived, choreographed, and directed by Michael Bennett. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 246-5990. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)... **Equus:** Peter Shaffer's continuously exciting melodrama about a boy who mutilates six horses in the very act of worshipping them. With Anthony Perkins and Ralph Seymour, directed by John Dexter. (Helen Hayes, 210 W. 46th St. 246-6380. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)... **The Fantasticks:** 6,937 performances so far. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays, except New Year's Eve, at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3. Special performances New Year's Eve at 6 and 9.)... **Godspell:** A musical adaptation of the Book of Matthew, and once a numbing prologue is over, it becomes a joyful celebration of theatre itself. (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 246-9156. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 2 and 5:30.)... **Grease:** A musical that parodies, by faithful imitation, the songs and dances of the nineteen-fifties. The young cast performs capably and with spirit. (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 245-5760. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Fridays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)... **The Magic Show:** A wretched musical, but the magic tricks make up for it all. (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 489-6392. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 2 and 5.)... **My Fair Lady:** An immaculate revival of the enchanting Lerner-Loewe musical. (Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 586-5555. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)... **Pippin:** A great big gorgeous show, built upon a tiny and trivial book. The chief miracle worker is the director and choreographer, Bob Fosse. With Northern J. Calloway, Michael Rupert, Eric Berry, and Antonia Ellis. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 265-2412. Nightly, except Sundays and Thursday, Dec. 30, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)... **Same Time, Next Year:** A comedy as neatly put together as a Cartier watch and with scarcely more heart. Sandy Dennis and Ted Bessell are the cast. (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 245-3430. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)... **Shenandoah:** A musical about the Civil War, but really about show biz. With William Chapman. (Alvin, 250 W. 52nd St. 757-8646. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)... **Vanities:** In three acts, three Southern high-school girl cheerleaders change from all but identical "best friends" (1963) *into quite different and incompatible* New Yorkers (1974), in this amusing and gently ironic comedy by Jack Heifner. Garland Wright directed the attractive performance. (Downstairs at the Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Wednesday, Dec. 22, at 2 and 8; Thursday, Dec. 23, at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; Sunday, Dec. 26, at 3 and 7:30; Monday through Thursday, Dec. 27-30, at 8; and New Year's Eve at 7 and 10.)... **The Wiz:** A black musical version of that well-remembered movie "The Wizard of Oz." The stars of the occasion are Tom H. John, who did the sets, and Geoffrey Holder, who did the costumes and also directed the show. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 246-0730. Nightly, except Mondays, at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays, except Dec. 22, and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

MISCELLANY

Salzburg Marionette Theatre—A thirteen-performance engagement—**Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs:** Sunday, Dec. 26, at 2 and 5; Monday, Dec. 27, at 1 and 4; and Tuesday, Dec. 28, and Thursday, Dec. 30, at 11 and 2.... **The Magic Flute:** Tuesday, Dec. 28, and Thursday, Dec. 30, at 7:30.... **Rumpelstiltskin:** Wednesday, Dec. 29, at 1 and 4.... **Die Fledermaus:** New Year's Eve at 7:30. (Alice Tully Hall. 362-1911.)

DANCE

New York City Ballet—Performances of "The Nutcracker" are being presented—or maybe are not being presented, depending on the outcome of current labor negotiations—through Sunday, Jan. 2. (New York State Theatre, Lincoln Center. TR 7-4727. Wednesday and Thursday, Dec. 22-23, at 6; Friday, Dec. 24, and Sunday, Dec. 26, at 2 and 6; Monday, Dec. 27, at 1; Tuesday, Dec. 28, at 2 and 8; Wednesday and Thursday, Dec. 29-30, at 1; and Friday, Dec. 31, at 8. Through Sunday, Feb. 20.)

Joffrey Ballet—A two-week engagement—Wednesday, Dec. 22, at 7; Friday, Dec. 24, at 1; and Sunday, Dec. 26, as well as Tuesday, Dec. 28, and Thursday, Dec. 30, at 6: "The Dream" and "Rodeo."... ¶ Thursday and Friday, Dec. 23-24, at 6; Sunday, Dec. 26, at 1; Monday, Dec. 27, at 7; Wednesday, Dec. 29, at 6; and Thursday, Dec. 30, at 1: "Petrouchka" and "Pineapple Poll."... ¶ Friday, Dec. 31, at 8: "Deuce Coupe II," "Weewis," and "Trinity." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 489-6810. Closes Sunday, Jan. 2.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town.)

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Rainbow Grill, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (PL 7-8970)—**Lionel Hampton** began accelerating in the mid-thirties, with his humming vibra-

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phone, cascading two-finger piano, and faster-than-sound drums, and he has decelerated only in the past several years. The Lionel Hampton Show—to judge by opening night at the Grill—is made up of vibraphone solos ("Ol' Man River," "Air Mail Special," "Memories of You," "How High the Moon") backed by an eleven-piece band, a couple of songs by a Sarah Vaughan follower named Sandy Patton, some BUNNY BRIGGS dancing, and a discursive "Hey-Ba-Ba-Re-Bop." in which Hampton chants and hums and briefly drums. His vibraphone has all its old lightsome swing—the easy chords, the legato glances at the beat, the oval, mushrooming sound—and so does Hampton himself, verandah and all. Indeed, when he sing-talks dance directions at Briggs (who, as one of our last great tap dancers, is inexplicably made to do representations of the Charleston, the Black Bottom, and the Hustle), he rocks church, as Leadbelly used to say. Nightly, except Sundays, at nine-fifteen and eleven-thirty. Dining and dancing.

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ALI'S ALLEY, 77 Greene St., between Spring and Broome Sts. (226-9042)—A former music loft that has been converted into a full-fledged, if unpretentious, bar and soul-food night club, owned by the gifted drummer and Coltrane alumnus RASHIED ALI. Since he reopened this summer, Ali has brought in some of the best new-jazz musicians on the scene. Alto saxophonist Noah Howard heads up a quartet through Thursday, Dec. 23; Friday through Sunday, Dec. 24-26, the fine out-there drummer SUNNY MURRAY and his quintet, the Untouchable Factor, will be onstage; and on Tuesday, Dec. 28, Ali himself will begin performing with his quintet. On Mondays, tenor saxophonist FRANK FOSTER presides over the Loud Minority, a *very* loose, spirited, head-turning musical monolith (twenty-two free-lance musicians, some young and promising, others older and fulfilled). Watch out, Thad and Mel (see Village Vanguard, below). Music from about ten. Dinner.

BAR NONE, 167 E. 33rd St. (684-3223)—Sort of thirties chophouse. The pianist DARDANELLE is on hand from seven until midnight, Tuesdays through Saturdays. Her playing is genteel Tatum, but her singing is pure, effortless, and delightful. On New Year's Eve, the music will run from four to nine.

BOOMER'S, 340 Bleecker St., at Christopher St. (243-0245)—A cheerful and unassuming West Village bar and restaurant that has for the past few years been presenting some of the best contemporary jazz players. The latest edition of the New York Jazz Quartet—pianist ROLAND HANNA (who sometimes plays as if he were in Marlboro Country), flutist FRANK WESS, drummer RICHIE PRATT, and an unnamed bassist—sits on the bandstand through Saturday, Dec. 25. On Sunday, Dec. 26, pianist Al Dailey will lead a trio. Monday and Tuesday, Dec. 27-28, bassist Walter Booker will bring in his ensemble; and on Wednesday, Dec. 29, saxophonist Houston Person and a classic, if lethargic, rhythm-and-blues trio will come in with singer Etta Jones for four nights. Music from about nine-thirty.

BOTTOM LINE, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—Here's the lineup: Sparks, a rock group, alternates with comedian Bob Shaw on Wednesday, Dec. 22; Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday, Dec. 23, 25, and 26, saxophonist Joe Farrell will trade sets with organist Charles Earland and his band; Monday through Wednesday, Dec. 27-29, second-generation Chicago-blues classicists BUDDY GUY and JUNIOR WELLS will be here with their band; and Thursday through Saturday, Dec. 30-Jan. 1, STUFF, a formerly nameless but not unnoticed first-rate rhythm-and-blues band, will take the stage. Stuff is a rank-and-file affair—no one musician stands out—composed of bassist GORDON EDWARDS, guitarists ERIC GALE and CORNELL DUPREE, pianist RICHARD TEE, and drummers STEVE GADD and CHRIS PARKER. All six are recording-studio heavies, some worked with Aretha Franklin and the late King Curtis, and all of them spent much of this year backing up Joe Cocker in concert and on record. Sundays through Thursdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays at nine and midnight. Dinner. Closed Christmas Eve.

BRADLEY'S, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—Exemplary pianists and their bassists are usually sequestered here, performing duets that are barely—if at all—amplified, in hectic, buzzing surroundings. JIMMY ROWLES is the exemplary pianist at the moment. On Sundays, pianist BARRY HARRIS takes a turn. Music from ten most nights; from nine-thirty on Sundays. Dinner. Closed Christmas.

CARLYLE HOTEL, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (RH 4-1600)—BOBBY SHORT, the prized fixture of the Café Carlyle, is home, vigorously paying his respects to Gershwin, Porter, Coward, and others. Supported by bassist Beverly Peer and drummer Gene Gammage, he appears Tuesdays through Saturdays from ten. Dinner and supper. Closed Christmas Eve and Christmas. . . . MARIAN MC PARTLAND is once again in the Bemelmans Bar, and she plays at least one night a week with MICHAEL MOORE, the extraordinary thirty-one-year-old Cincinnati bassist. Music from nine-thirty to one, except Sundays, Christmas Eve, and Christmas.

C.B.G.B. & O.M.F.U.G., 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—A long, narrow, rustic bar, lined overhead with rows of neon beer signs that hang from the ceiling. Onstage are mostly local, primitive rock bands. There are no discreet sound checks, no roadies, no extensive record-company backing (in fact, there's usually none at all), no seating section for the music business, and, often, no place for *anyone* to sit. The T-shirted Ramones, one of the better-known regular groups, will be performing their loud, simple, and shorter-than-short *oeuvres* Thursday through Saturday, Dec. 23-25. Music from about nine-thirty. Monday is showcase night.

CLEO, 1 Lincoln Plaza, Broadway at 63rd St. (724-6301)—MABEL MERCER, now seventy-six, is working in a lamplit alcove looking out on high ceilings and mirrors and leather upholstery. She appears radiant, and her voice, so elusive in recent years, is strong and comfortable. Jimmy Lyon is on piano. Two performances, starting at ten, Tuesdays through Saturdays.

COOKERY, 21 University Pl., at 8th St. (OR 4-4450)—The forthright, cute, and cuddly HELEN HUMES does ballads and authoritative blues songs with courtly, delicate, and unflappable support from pianist ELLIS LARKINS weeknights. Boogie-wooglist SAMMY PRICE cuts loose on Sundays. Music from eight to one. On New Year's Eve, gospel singers Helen Bryant and Edgar Kendricks will join the proceedings, which will begin at ten. Dining.

EDDIE CONDON'S, 144 W. 54th St. (265-8277)—The audiences are largely characterized by coats and ties and cigars, and they come here (and to Jimmy Ryan's, just thirty paces west) to hear traditional small-band jazz. The house band, which begins after nine-thirty, is a low-keyed and controlled sextet headed by bassist Red Balaban. On Tuesday, Dec. 28, tenor saxophonist ILLINOIS JACQUET will sit in with the regulars. On Sunday, Dec. 26, organist SHIRLEY SCOTT will get together with two wonderful Basie section men, trombonist AL GREY and saxophonist JIMMY FORREST, from eight. Dinner.

GREGORY'S, 1149 First Ave., at 63rd St. (371-2220)—The resident swing threesome—pianist BROOKS KERR, drummer SONNY GREER, and clarinettist-saxophonist RUSSELL PROCOPE—is here Wednesdays through Sundays. On New Year's Eve, pianist HOD O'BRIAN and guitarist CHUCK WAYNE will alternate with Kerr, Greer, and Procope. Mondays and Tuesdays, pianist AL HAIG works with bassist Jamil Nasser and Chuck Wayne. Music from ten to three. On Sunday, Dec. 26, vibraharpist WARREN CHIASSON, pianist Dick Katz, and bassist Earl May will join forces from five-thirty to nine-thirty. Mondays through Saturdays, Gene Roland, Loumell Morgan, and Morris Edwards hold sessions from five to nine-thirty.

HOPPER'S, 452 Sixth Ave., at 11th St. (260-0250)—Guitar students from all over, and ordinary citizens as well, are flocking to hear JIM HALL, who is currently in action with his trio. Mondays through Thursdays, at nine-thirty and eleven, and three times on Fridays and Saturdays, at nine-thirty, eleven, and twelve-thirty. No music Sundays.

JIMMY RYAN'S, 154 W. 54th St. (CO 5-9505)—ROY ELDRIDGE upholds tradition on West 54th Street, aided by the resident blowers—pianist Johnny Morris, drummer Eddie Locke, clarinettist Joe Muranyi, bassist Ted Sturgis, and trombonist Bobby Pratt. On Mondays, Max Kaminsky leads the group. Music weeknights from nine-thirty to three. On Sundays, Kaminsky directs another group of musical archivists from eight until two. Closed Christmas Eve, Christmas, and New Year's Day.

MICHAEL'S PUB, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—ANITA O'DAY, who began making vocal breakthroughs some thirty years ago, has moved in with her refined and sometimes elusive musical insights, plus a backup quartet guided by pianist NORMAN SIMMONS. Tuesdays through Saturdays from nine-fifteen to one. On Mondays, from nine-thirty to midnight, Woody Allen comes and goes, talking of Lorenzo Tio. Dinner and supper. Closed Sundays.

MIKELL'S, 760 Columbus Ave., at 97th St. (864-8832)—An often crowded upper West Side jazz-and-soul café. Various groups assemble on the canopied bandstand all week. Music from ten to three. Dinner.

OTHER END, 149 Bleecker St. (673-7030)—Raun MacKinnon, a longtime local folkie, and a talented one, is here through Thursday, Dec. 23, opposite another folksinger, Jake Holmes; Holmes will be performing through Wednesday, Dec. 29. On Thursday, Dec. 30, country-chic singer and pianist Ronee Blakley will take over. Shows most nights at nine and eleven-thirty; on Fridays and Saturdays at nine and midnight. Snacks. Closed Christmas Eve.

RAINBOW ROOM, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (PL 7-9090)—SY OLIVER is at the helm of an orchestra Tuesdays through Thursdays from seven to one, Fridays and Saturdays from eight to two, and Sundays from six to midnight. Dining and dancing.

RENO SWEENEY, 126 W. 13th St. (691-0900)—Perhaps the nicest cabaret on the scene. Cathy Chamberlain, who has an ample, crusty voice, does old songs like "Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?" and originals written in a similar forty-year-old mode. She works Tuesdays through Saturdays with a traditional backup band that includes drummer Freddie Moore. Tony Bird, a folksinger from Malawi, in Southeast Africa, will open the show for Chamberlain and company through Saturday, Dec. 25. On Sunday and Monday, Dec. 26-27, Barbara Cook will drop by to sing standards and tunes from her Broadway past. Shows at nine and midnight. Dining. BLOSSOM DEARIE presents concert-style sets Thursdays through Saturdays, from five-thirty to seven, in which she plays piano and sings "I'm Hip," "Peel Me a Grape," and "The Pro Musica Antiqua" in a small, fragile, and very direct voice.

STORYVILLE, 41 E. 58th St. (755-1640)—The revised music policy here now allows for different musicians and ensembles each night; some of them are singer and pianist Bobby Scott on Wednesday, Dec. 22; trombonist Matthew Gee and his band, doing Ellington tunes, on Thursday, Dec. 23; FRANK FOSTER and a version of his band, the LOUD MINORITY, on Friday, Dec. 24; and for six nights, beginning Monday, Dec. 27, the TED CURSON septet. Music from ten to two-thirty. Closed Sundays.

STRYKER'S, 103 W. 86th St., at Columbus Ave. (874-8754)—Deceptively sleepy-looking from the outside, this small, dark, and pleasant upper West Side bar sees various first-rate jazz groups pass through every week. DAVE MATTHEWS' twelve-piece band meets on Mondays; on Tuesdays, saxophonist Eddie Daniels is in charge of a robust quartet; LEE KONITZ, always worth hearing, is on hand with a nonet on Wednesdays and Thursdays. On Friday, Dec. 24, guitarist JOE PUMA'S trio will be expanded to include saxophonist CECIL PAYNE. Music from nine-thirty. On New Year's Eve, house favorites Konitz and Puma are joined by singer Molly Lyons and drummer Jo Jones, Jr., from ten to four. Closed Sundays, Christmas, and New Year's Day.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave., S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—The jammed-together tables and chairs are usually filled in this animated

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

restaurant. Guitarist JOHN ABERCROMBIE, bassist DAVE HOLLAND, and keyboard player Mike Nock work together through Thursday, Dec. 23; Saturday, Dec. 25, and Monday and Tuesday, Dec. 27-28, pianist Hal Galper will lead a quintet; and Wednesday through Saturday, Dec. 29-Jan. 1, guitarist JACK WILKINS, bassist EDDIE GOMEZ, and trumpeter RANDY BRECKER will team up (with drummer JACK DE JOHNETTE dropping in on Saturday). Music from nine Mondays through Thursdays, and from ten on Fridays and Saturdays. Closed Christmas Eve.

TRAMPS, 125 E. 15th St., at Irving Pl. (260-0370)—STORMIN' NORMAN AND SUZY, the broadly talented, funny, spirited, and—thank goodness—unself-conscious young Boston quintet, is back, Tuesdays through Fridays at ten and midnight. On New Year's Eve, the shows will be at eight-thirty and midnight.

VILLAGE GATE, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—The music has been moved downstairs in this Village landmark, which draws both tourists and knowledgeable jazz partisans. Saxophonist Stanley Turrentine and his quartet, who are here for two weeks, alternate with Ron Douglas, a funny, inventive young comedian, through Thursday, Dec. 30. Turrentine's group will then share the facilities, on Friday and Saturday, Dec. 31-Jan. 1, with the literally towering blues pianist and singer MEMPHIS SLIM, who will be making a rare New York appearance. The sixty-one-year-old bluesman may be better known in Europe, where he has lived and performed for several years, than in this country. Some of his compositions are well known here, though—"Every Day (I Have the Blues)" and "Mother Earth" are two of them. Hearing his piercing baritone and entrancing blues runs on the piano and celeste are prerequisites for blues enthusiasts. Music from about ten.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (989-9011)—The air quality in this world-famous jazz institution is unacceptable, but go anyway. BETTY CARTER, one of the very few truly improvisational, risk-taking singers, winds up a stint with her trio on Sunday, Dec. 26. On Tuesday, Dec. 28, RAHSAAN ROLAND KIRK, who is a reed section all by himself, will descend the stairs with his quintet. On Mondays, THAD and MEL (JONES and LEWIS) blast forth with their fifteen colleagues. Music from ten.

WALDORF-ASTORIA, Park Ave. at 49th St. (EL 5-3000)—New Year's Eve in the Grand Ballroom with—who else?—GUY LOMBARDO and the Royal Canadians, along with CAROL LAWRENCE, BILLY ECKSTINE and millions of American and Canadian television viewers. Music from nine to three. Dinner. Black tie.

WEST BOONDOCK, 114 Tenth Ave., at 17th St. (924-9723)—A soul-food *boite* with a friendly staff, hundreds of gold Christmas ornaments hanging (year-round) from the ceiling, a near-impenetrable layer of sawdust on the floor, and some glowing piano-bass duos. Music begins at eight. Closed Sundays, Christmas, and New Year's Day.

WEST END CAFÉ, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (666-8750)—The old hangout for beatniks and Columbia students is now a bricked-and-boarded cafeteria and music room. Mondays and Tuesdays, Franc Williams is in charge of a quartet that features pianist Dill Jones and trombonist and electric-guitar pioneer Eddie Durham; on Wednesdays, JO JONES commands a quartet; and on Thursday and Friday, Dec. 23-24, George Kelly's Jazz Sultans. Saturdays and Sundays are usually session times for the likes of EARLE WARREN, Paul Quinichette, and a rhythm section. Music from nine to one.

JAZZ/FOLK/ROCK CONCERTS, PERSONAL APPEARANCES, ETC.

BARRY MANILOW (WITH LADY FLASH)—Uris Theatre, 51st St. west of Broadway. 586-6510. Nightly, except Friday, Dec. 24, at 8. Closes Sunday, Jan. 2.

BENEFIT CONCERT—Ray Barretto and his orchestra, the Gil Evans Orchestra, the Unholy Modal Rounders, and others. (Felt Forum, Madison Square Garden. Eighth Ave. between 31st and 33rd Sts. 564-4400. Wednesday, Dec. 22, at 8.)

ZAPPA—Palladium, 126 E. 14th St. Sunday through Tuesday, Dec. 26-28, at 8. For information about tickets, call 541-7290.

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PATTI SMITH GROUP (WITH JOHN CALE) and TELEVISION—Palladium. Friday, Dec. 31, at 8.

ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6. They will be closed Christmas and New Year's Day. Some, as indicated, will be closed Friday, Dec. 24, and Friday, Dec. 31, and some are likely to close early on those days.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

ARIK BRAUER—Richly colored gouaches, teeming with surrealist figures in surrealist settings. Through Friday, Dec. 31. (Aberbach, 988 Madison Ave., at 77th St.)

LYONEL FEININGER (1871-1956)—Drawings and watercolors of his favorite subjects—labyrinthine walled cities and towering racing yachts—drawn with his characteristic crackling line and enlivened with his geometric planes of pure color. Through Jan. 29. (Sabarsky, 987 Madison Ave., at 77th St.)

BRUNO LUCCHESI—Small sculptures, mostly in bronze or terra-cotta, and all in what might be called the vernacular style: a woman shaking out a rug, for instance, or stretched out on a sofa in a luxurious yawn, or with a child sprawled all over her lap. Through Jan. 8. (Forum, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

JOAN MITCHELL—The white canvas that once figured prominently in the backgrounds of this artist's abstract landscapes has now disappeared under a deluge of color—a veritable storm of pigment that takes up practically every inch of her huge compositions, one of them nine feet two inches high and twenty-four feet four inches wide. Through Friday, Dec. 31. (Fourcade, 36 E. 75th St. Closed Friday, Dec. 24.)

ROBERT NICKLE—Collages of found paper; first one-man show in New York. Through Jan. 8. (Acquavella, 18 E. 79th St. Open Mondays.)

THOMAS SHANNON—Did you know that the globe we live on is wrapped around a forty-five-hundred-mile metal cube, and that one gold-tipped corner of that cube is protruding from the earth in a tiny garden behind the gallery where this artist's work is showing? (The opposite corner sticks out near Perth, Australia.) The gold-tipped corner reflects rays straight back to the sun, and a captured ray, looking very much like a stainless-steel wand about ten feet long, hangs as a trophy on a gallery wall. These and other wonders, plus drawings and diagrams, make up this exhibit. Through Jan. 8. (Feldman, 33 E. 74th St. Open Mondays; closed Friday, Dec. 31.)

CHARLES SHAW (1892-1974)—Montages incorporating antique playing cards and gaming counters. Through Friday, Dec. 24. (Washburn, 820 Madison Ave., at 68th St.)

PAUL SMITH / JOANNA KRASNER—Hand-painted porcelain vases, jugs, bowls, and plates. / Representational paintings and drawings. Through Friday, Dec. 24. (Krasner, 1043 Madison Ave., at 80th St.)

HARVEY WEISS—Welded-brass abstract sculpture, some of it related to marine subjects like anchors and mooring posts, and some of it concerned with metal forms under severe stress and depicted just at the breaking point. Through Thursday, Dec. 30. (Rosenberg, 20 E. 79th St. Closed Friday, Dec. 24.)

CHARLES WELLS—Formal carvings, in Carrara and black marble, travertine, and wood, mostly of female heads and torsos, plus quick figure studies in pencil and watercolor portraits. Through Jan. 8. (FAR Gallery, 746 Madison Ave., at 65th St. Open Mondays.)

AZTEC STONE SCULPTURE—Long since deprived of a society that believed in them, these squat, brooding deities are now biding their time, waiting for another turn in the wheel of fortune. There are seventy-seven carvings in all, some of them merely decorative and not especially religious. Through Jan. 30. (Center for Inter-American Relations, 680 Park Ave., at 68th St. Daily, except Mondays, noon to 6.)

GROUP SHOWS—At the GRAHAM, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St.: On the third floor, exceptionally polished pencil drawings of nudes by Robert Crowl; pen-and-ink book illustrations by Edward Sorel; and small chips of porcelain, inset with tiny sculptured figures and landscapes, by Alexa Grace. On the second floor, three miniaturists—Victoria Fairbanks, who does English country scenes; Pamela Bianco, who does imaginative drawings; and Anthea Lewis, who does jungle cats and house cats with equal facility. Through Friday, Dec. 24. . . . HIRSCHL & ADLER, 21 E. 67th St.: American drawings and watercolors spanning a two-hundred-year period, by a hundred artists including George Bellows, Mary Cassatt, and Winslow Homer. Through Thursday, Dec. 30. . . . KNOEDLER, 19 E. 70th St.: A show devoted to the early paintings of Morris Louis, Kenneth Noland, and Frank Stella. Through Jan. 13. (Closes Thursday, Dec. 23, at 1:30, and closed Friday, Dec. 24, and Friday, Dec. 31.) . . . NICHOLLS, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St.: Cartoons and other works by Charles Addams, Peter Arno, George Booth, Whitney Darrow, Jr., Arthur Getz, Charles E. Martin, Warren Miller, Frank Modell, Mary Petty, George Price, Charles Saxon, Ronald Searle, William Steig, James Stevenson, Richard Taylor, and Barney Tobey. Through Jan. 29. . . . WEYHE, 794 Lexington Ave., at 61st St.: Prints, drawings, watercolors, and small sculptures by Louis Lozowick, Maillol, Picasso, and others. Through Friday, Dec. 31.

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

RICHARD ANUSZKIEWICZ—Abstract paintings in precise, orderly patterns that seem to pulse with warm color. A twenty-year span of work is represented here. Through Jan. 8. (Crispo, 41 E. 57th St. Mondays through Fridays 11:30 to 4:30; Saturdays, 10:30 to 5:30.)

JOSEPH BINDER (1898-1972)—Posters, paintings and pastels comprise this retrospective of the works of a Viennese designer. Through Jan. 14. (Austrian Institute, 11 E. 52nd St. Open Mondays; closed Friday, Dec. 24, and Friday, Dec. 31.)

JOAN BROWN—Large, autobiographical paintings done in a no-nonsense, almost Egyptian flat pattern. Through Friday, Dec. 31. (Frumkin, 50 W. 57th St. Open Mondays; open Saturdays at noon; closed Sundays.)

DONALD EVANS / MELL DANIEL (1899-1975)—Fruits, birds, native women, and lush landscapes are depicted on a new issue of stamps for this miniaturist's imaginary countries—Adjudani, Katibo, and Nadorp, for instance. A memorial show of works done toward the beginning and again toward the end of the career of this artist, who took a long leave (1933-67) from his easel to devote himself to business, successfully. The early works centered on tree branches, the latter ones on purely abstract designs. Through Friday, Dec. 24. (Fischbach, 29 W. 57th St.)

SONIA GECHTOFF—Abstract drawings, done in pencil on paper prepared with an acrylic background, which seem to open a window on a realm where everything is organized more neatly and efficiently and rhythmically than it is around here. Through Jan. 7. (Cortella, 41 E. 57th St.)

LIONEL GILBERT / LEGH MYERS—Still-lifes and interiors in semi-abstract and occasionally not at all abstract patterns by this veteran New York painter. / Twisting, sinuous pieces of carved and highly polished marble, some of them based on vegetable forms and some on organic ones, and others purely abstract. Through Friday, Dec. 24. (Alonzo, 30 W. 57th St.)

JAN GROTH—Wall-size black tapestries by a Norwegian artist who has woven a single nervous streak of white into each of them, sometimes cutting across the whole piece and sometimes barely intruding at one edge. Through Friday, Dec. 31. (Parsons, 24 W. 57th St.)

MANUEL HUGHES / BRUCE MONTEITH—Small still lifes, done in pastels or acrylics, showing arrangements of arcs in various positions and casting shadows. / Box constructions in which meticulous miniatures of architectural details can be seen—a revolving Art Deco doorway, a classroom with a clock and blackboard,

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hotel lobby with tile floors, a stairwell, and so on. Through Jan. 6. (Kornblee, 20 W. 57th St.)

KÄTHE KOLLWITZ (1867-1945)—Eighty-three prints and original drawings devoted to her powerful and unremitting graphic protests against the lot of the poor and downtrodden, relieved occasionally by a cathartic work showing the destitute storming the gates of the privileged. Through Thursday, Dec. 30. (Kennedy, 40 W. 57th St.)

RONALD MARKHAM—Bright, colorful wall hangings that look like Persian rugs at first glance, until one perceives the bawdy figures that make up many of the patterns. In addition, there are tiny watercolors of city scenes, and bits of landscape that are like mirages shining in the distance. Through Friday, Dec. 24. (Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St.)

ROBERT MOTHERWELL / SONDRA FRECKLETON—Distinctive monotypes of abstract shapes, mostly black-and-white but sometimes set off with a dash of bright color. / Large watercolors of showy plants in becoming arrangements. Through Jan. 4. (Alexander, 20 W. 57th St.)

RICHARD GORMAN POWERS—Seaside studies, done in acrylics, that catch the curve of a wave, the nacreous glitter of shells entangled in seaweed, and the difference between the waters of the Caribbean and the waters of Maine. Through Thursday, Dec. 30. (Rehn, 655 Madison Ave., at 60th St. Open Mondays; closed Friday, Dec. 24.)

CHRISTOPHER PRATT—Realist paintings, drawings, and prints of empty rooms, figures, and other subjects. Through Friday, Dec. 31. (Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. Closed Friday, Dec. 24; open Monday, Dec. 27.)

ERIC SLOANE—Landscapes of New England in all seasons. Through Jan. 8. (Hammer, 51 E. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

MICHAEL STEINER—Small abstract bronzes made from wax models. Through Jan. 5. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. Closed Friday, Dec. 24, and Friday, Dec. 31.)

ANNE TABACHNICK—The interior of her Westbeth studio and views from its windows are frequent subjects for this artist, who combines fresh, direct draftsmanship and a distinctive sense of space and color. Through Friday, Dec. 31. (Aaron Berman, 50 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

ROBERT VICKREY—Another series of this artist's sunlit egg-tempera paintings. Through Friday, Dec. 24. (Midtown, 11 E. 57th St.)

GROUP SHOWS—At the **DE NAGY**, 29 W. 57th St.: The end of the gallery's twenty-fifth year is being observed with a showing of some of the realist artists who have been associated with the gallery all along, among them Grace Hartigan, Jane Wilson, and Fairfield Porter. Through Friday, Dec. 31. . . . **ESMAN**, 29 W. 57th St.: Small works by well-known artists, including a Christo project for wrapping the trees along the Champs-Elysées, a couple of tiny (for him) nudes by Tom Wesselmann, and samplings of Diebenkorn, Motherwell, Frankenthaler, Twombly, Steinberg, and so on. Through Jan. 6. . . . **HEIDENBERG**, 50 W. 57th St.: Kinetic sculptures, Optical paintings, and graphics by a group that includes Victor Vasarely and Jesús Rafael Soto. Through Jan. 29. (Closed Friday, Dec. 31.) . . . **MARLBOROUGH**, 40 W. 57th St.: Recent works by ten gallery artists include a bowl filled to bursting with fruit that itself is bursting with ripeness, by Botero; an almost photographic portrait of Barnett Newman, by Larry Rivers; and a massive collage of Abe Lincoln in a red-white-and-blue plaster frame, by Red Grooms. Through Friday, Dec. 31. (Closed Friday, Dec. 24; open Monday, Dec. 27.) . . . **SACHS**, 29 W. 57th St.: A show of paintings by gallery artists Power Boothe, John Ferren, Alice Baber, and others. Through Thursday, Dec. 30. . . . **TRUMAN**, 38 E. 57th St.: Mr. Truman's second "This Doesn't Look Like a Work of Art" show, in which thirteen artists display things they couldn't *not* make—among them a sixty-five-foot stretch of what might be a special roadbed for a toy railroad, by Joe Neill; what looks like a hundred and fifty loaves of bread made of raw wood and clustered around a huge raw-wood breadboard, by Ursula von Rydingsvard; and three slender eight-foot sticks made of reed, bound with copper and brass wire, and painted with casein, and stood in corners, where they cast odd shadows, by Tom Nozkowski. Through Thursday, Dec. 30. (Closed Friday, Dec. 24.)

GALLERIES—SoHo

ANSELL BRAY / NEAL GIBRALTER—Large and accomplished pencil portraits, mostly of friends, who are usually shown in settings appropriate to their ways of life. / Precisionist renditions of spheres, great piles of them so arranged that they seem to rise and fall in orderly peaks and craters. Through Friday, Dec. 31. (Razor, 464 West Broadway. Opens at 1.)

HOWARD BUCHWALD—In all these abstract paintings, a thick field of many layers of oil, brushed onto linen or canvas, is gouged here and there with arcs, whose precise placement is the result of projections worked out by geometric means and involving the drilling of holes through the surface (as few as eight and as many as forty). Related drawings are also being shown. Through Jan. 6. (Hoffman, 429 West Broadway.)

ALEXANDER CALDER (1898-1976)—Inviting-looking hammocks and huge straw mats woven to his designs by Indian craftsmen in Nicaragua and Guatemala. Through Jan. 5. (Bonino, 98 Prince St.)

TINA GIROUARD—Four painted stencil patterns superimposed on heavy rag paper. Through Jan. 8. (Holly Solomon, 392 West Broadway.)

EUNICE GOLDEN—Erotic films and photographic works. Through Jan. 5. (SoHo 20, 99 Spring St. Opens at noon; the films begin at 3.)

MARY GRIGORIADIS—Abstract designs with a Byzantine or ancient Egyptian flavor, painted on raw linen in thick strokes of oils and acrylics and in downbeat colors. Through Jan. 5. (A.I.R., 97 Wooster St.)

ROCKNE KREBS—An environmental arrangement that doesn't quite take the place of Grandma Moses' winter scenes but that does include thirty-eight Christmas trees traversed by red and green laser beams that ricochet through the halls by means of mirrors. Through Jan. 5. (Yu, 393 West Broadway.)

MARILYN LEVINE / WARREN OWENS—Leather jackets and bits of belts, buckles attached, are hung on the walls, and tired-looking suitcases are piled on racks, and all of them are made of ceramic. / Massive pieces of tarred timber, taken from heavy-duty industrial pallets, are used in the construction of these abstract sculptures. Through Thursday, Dec. 30. (O. K. Harris, 383 West Broadway.)

STEVEN LINN / GUY JOHNSON—Bronze and wood sculptures of everyday articles plus found everyday articles—for example, a chest of drawers (found) containing bronze shirts (sculpted), neatly folded, and a child's pacifier, in bronze. In front of this is a pair of cowboy boots with a pair of rolled-down Levis in the legs, ready to be stepped into. There is also a chestnut seller, part found, part sculpted. / Photo-Realist paintings that incorporate Diane Arbus photos—for example, a dirigible intrudes on an industrial-looking street scene that is a dreary eyesore except for a bare-breasted woman in the foreground. Through Friday, Dec. 31. (Meisel, 141 Prince St.)

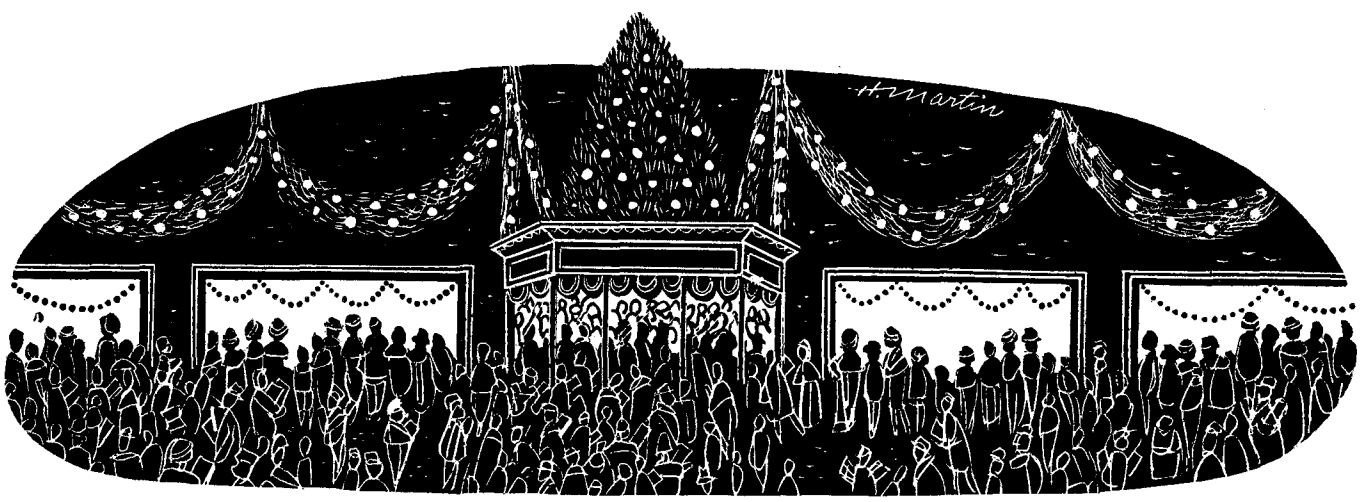
MALCOLM MORLEY—Expressionistic watercolors. Through Thursday, Dec. 30. (Hutchinson, 138 Greene St.)

BOAZ VAADIA / JACK HERNON—Eight sculptured pieces that look like primitive objects of worship, consisting of a rough stone, scrawled with symbols and cradled in a framework of raw saplings, by an Israeli artist whose work seems to combine both African and American Indian motifs. / A series called "The Strawberry Photos," which have been doctored with pencil. Some of them are mildly erotic, as things go these days. Through Friday, Dec. 31. (Hundred Acres, 456 West Broadway.)

SANFORD AND MICHAEL WURMFELD—Color progressions worked out on grid patterns, some of them enormous and some of them small watercolor renditions, by Sanford Wurmfeld, and 16-mm.-film experiments in the same field by him and his brother Michael. Through Friday, Dec. 24. (Caldwell, 383 West Broadway.)

CONTEMPORARY GRAPHICS—An exceptional showing of artist's proofs, printer's proofs, and *bon-à-tirer* proofs (all terms that indicate a quality of prints as near perfection as is possible), of recent graphic works by fifteen top-flight contemporary artists. Included are an unusual photo-silk screen of a watercolor landscape by Saul Steinberg, combined on the sheet with a lithograph by the same artist; a portrait by David Hockney; an array of tools by Jim Dine; a large bouquet by Andy Warhol; and works by Larry Rivers, Alex Katz, Robert Motherwell, Peter Stroud, Jasper Johns, Robert Indiana, James Rosenquist, Robert Rauschenberg, Billy Al Bengston, Doug Ohlson, and Marisol. Through Friday, Dec. 24. (Caldwell, 383 West Broadway.)

ARTIST'S CHOICE: FIGURATIVE ART IN NEW YORK—Restless young realist artists and some of their older allies have drawn up their wagons into a circle here to defend the old-fashioned ethic of working from nature, and five galleries are participating in the show, which lasts until Jan. 5. Nearly two hundred artists are represented. (Tuesdays through Saturdays, noon to 6.) At the **GREEN MOUNTAIN** and the **BOWERY**, 135 Greene St., the exhibits include a cardboard sculptured caricature of Gertrude Stein by Red Grooms; a Vermont



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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

landscape by Marjorie Kramer; and other works by Alex Katz, Paul Georges, John Opie, and Michael Berg. At the **PRINCE STREET,** 106 Prince St., the exhibits include a portrait of a man reading a book, by the late Fairfield Porter; a female nude by Philip Pearlstein, and a street scene from the lower-rent area, by Susan Severson. At the **SOHO CENTER FOR VISUAL ARTS,** 114 Prince St., there is a large wooden sculpture of a mod woman by William King, and other works by Helen Wilson and Bill Sullivan. At the **FIRST STREET GALLERY,** 118 Prince St., the exhibits include a wood-and-plaster reproduction of an apartment interior by Harry Roseman, and other works by Sidney Goodman and Alfred Leslie.

GROUP SHOW—Sculptures by Ira Joel Haber and Robert Witz, and paintings by Bill Jensen. Through Friday, Dec. 31. (Thorp, 139 Spring St.)

OTHER GALLERIES

JACKIE FERRARA—Two pyramid-shaped wooden constructions. Through Feb. 20. (Hammarskjöld Plaza Sculpture Garden, Second Ave. at 47th St.)

EDWARD GOREY—Drawings, etchings, and related works. Through Friday, Dec. 31. (Gotham Book Mart, 41 W. 47th St. Open Mondays.)

ERIKA WEIHS / JAN WUNDERMAN—Figurative paintings. / Abstract paintings done in earth colors and based on landscapes—specifically the rock walls of canyons. Through Wednesday, Dec. 29. (Roko, 90 E. 10th St. Opens at noon; closed Friday, Dec. 24.)

CLAIRE ZEISLER—Sculptures made of wool, leather, chamois, and so on, by a Chicago woman who was a pioneer in the field of fibre art. The pieces range from a ten-foot-tall cascade of red and light-gray strips of scissored leather to ornamental doodads for the top of a dresser. Through Jan. 8. (Hadler, 35 E. 20th St. Closes for a week's vacation Wednesday, Dec. 29.)

NEW YORK'S STEPCHILDREN—An exhibit of photographs of architectural details on civic buildings, some of which are earmarked for destruction. Through Thursday, Dec. 30. (American Institute of Architects, 20 W. 40th St. Mondays through Fridays, except Dec. 24, from 9:30 to 4:30.)

ANEMONES: AN AIR AQUARIUM—An undersea environment in which enormous lobsters, carp, blowfish, sea anemones, and the like, made of clear, soft polyethylene and red sailcloth, swell up to their full size—as much as forty feet long—when computer-set air blowers turn on, and subside, as if exhausted, when the blowers turn off. Spectators are free to walk around in this pulsating world and marvel at the whole operation, which was created by the artist Otto Piene and his assistants Mira Cantor, Ragnhild Karlstrom, and Ken Leslie, and which occupies the glass-enclosed ground floor of 88 Pine St. (a block north of Wall St.) Through Friday, Dec. 31. (Tuesdays through Fridays, 11:30 to 2.)

GROUP SHOWS—At the **ALTERNATIVE CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL ARTS,** 28 E. 4th St.: Drawings, prints, and works in mixed mediums by three Latin-American artists: Jafet Heisler, Liliana Porter, and Luis Camnitzer. Through Jan. 8. (Wednesdays through Saturdays, 1 to 6.)... **CATHEDRAL MUSEUM OF RELIGIOUS ART,** Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St.: Paintings and sculptures by American and European artists—Rothko, Soutine, Flack, and others—on loan from private collections and museums. Through Jan. 2. (Tuesdays through Fridays, 9 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, noon to 5.)... **GLASS,** 315 Central Park W., at 91st St.: Works on paper by Benny Andrews, Max Weber, and others. Through Friday, Dec. 31. (Thursdays through Saturdays, 1 to 6.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

LUCIEN AIGNER—A group of prints, all of them taken in France before the Second World War by a photojournalist who used to work under the name of Aral. Through Thursday, Dec. 30. (French Institute/Alliance Française Gallery, 22 E. 60th St. Mondays through Fridays, except Dec. 24, from 10 to 6.)

WILLIAM CHRISTENBERRY—Small-format color pictures of architecture and grave sites in deepest Alabama, taken with a Brownie camera,

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			22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	1

plus three-dimensional wood-and-plaster models of some of the subjects, plus further photographs of the *models*. This is the artist's first one-man show in New York, and it is the first full-scale photography show to be put on by the gallery, which has, for the occasion, provided white cotton film-editors' gloves for those who want to handle the photographs. Through Jan. 8. (Zabriskie, 29 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

TED D'ARMS / GAIL RUSSELL—Abstract color pictures. / Photographs (also in color) taken in Mexico and in the port town of Belize, Honduras. Through Jan. 2. (Midtown Y Gallery, 344 E. 14th St. Sundays through Thursdays, noon to 8; Fridays, noon to 4.)

JANIE EISENBERG—Forty photographs, half of them devoted to New York City bigwigs—Felix Rohatyn, Patrick Cunningham, Mayor Beame—and the other half to non-bigwigs. Through Jan. 15. (Crossroads at Chess City, 2639 Broadway, at 100th St. Daily, noon to midnight.)

MICHAEL GREENE AND BRIAN WILLIAM KOSOFF—Black-and-white prints by two young photographers who studied at the School of Visual Arts. Through Thursday, Dec. 30. (Third Eye, 17 Seventh Ave. S., at Leroy St. Tuesdays through Fridays, 4 to 8; Saturdays and Sundays, noon to 6.)

LEWIS W. HINE (1874-1940) / **BARON DE MEYER** (1869-1946)—More than two hundred small-scale prints documenting child-labor conditions in this country at the turn of the century. / A selection that includes twenty portraits and costume studies of Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney. Through Jan. 29. (Helios, 18 E. 67th St.)

LUCAS SAMARAS—Small, tricked-up color photographs of the artist, usually shown in the nude striking dramatic poses, and one large abstract tapestry, built up like a quilt. Through Jan. 8. (Pace, 32 E. 57th St. Closed Friday, Dec. 24.)

STEPHEN SHORE—Color views of city scenes, highways, suburban houses, and storefronts. Through Jan. 2. (Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St. Daily, except Wednesdays and Christmas, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9. Closes Friday, Dec. 24, at 5.)

EVE SONNEMAN—Thirty pairs of color photographs (each taken in sequence) on top of the World Trade Center. Through Friday, Dec. 24. (Castelli Graphics, 4 E. 77th St.)

BERT STERN—Photographs of, among others, Marilyn Monroe, Louis Armstrong, and Grandma Moses. Through Jan. 29. (Knowlton, 19 E. 71st St. Closed Friday, Dec. 24, and Friday, Dec. 31.)

COLE WESTON / ILSE BING—Black-and-white prints from the forties and fifties, plus recent color photographs, by the youngest son of Edward Weston. / Photographs of Paris in the thirties and other works by a German-born photographer. Through Jan. 8. (Witkin, 41 E. 57th St.)

TAD YAMASHIRO—Silver-emulsion prints on handmade paper. Through Thursday, Dec. 30. (Carlton, 127 E. 69th St.)

GROUP SHOWS—At the **ELKON,** 1063 Madison Ave., at 80th St.: An exhibit of nineteenth- and twentieth-century photographs, with examples by W. H. Jackson, Steichen, and Weston, among others. Through Jan. 5.... **HARLOW,** 1100 Madison Ave., at 82nd St.: Photographs of dancers, most of them taken in the early years of this century, by Charles Schenk, Emil Otto Hoppe, Arnold Genthe, and others. Through Friday, Dec. 24. (Wednesdays through Saturdays, noon to 6.) ... **INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY,** 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St.: Walker Evans, Irving Penn, and William Eggleston are three of the photographers in a show that traces the development of both commercial and non-commercial photography since the late eighteen hundreds. Also, in a separate exhibit, portraits of Pablo Casals by Yousuf Karsh, Fritz Henle, Elliott Erwitt, and others. Through Jan. 2. (Open Sundays; closed Friday, Dec. 31.)... **MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK,** Fifth Ave. at 104th St.: More than two hundred prints, most of them of people at work, that were taken by a commercial-photography firm in New York City at the turn of the century. Through Jan. 30. (Tuesdays through Saturdays, except Christmas, 10 to 5; Sundays and New Year's Day, 1 to 5.)

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—A sumptuous exhibit of clothing and accessories from Russia that focusses on the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and ranges from regional peasant costumes to the wedding dress of Catherine the Great. Through Aug. 31, when the moth threat is over.... ¶ A big exposition of Andrew Wyeth's works, half of it centered on the Kuerner farm in Pennsylvania and the other half centered on the Olson house in Maine, with the works arranged so that one can follow an idea from the earliest sketch (or inspiration) on through the finished painting. Through Feb. 6.... ¶ An exhibit of drawings, prints, and illustrated books by artists who worked in seventeenth-century Rome, among them Poussin, Rubens, and Bernini. Through Jan. 16.... ¶ Paintings and drawings from Maurice Prendergast's Boston Public Garden sketchbook. Through May 1. (The museum's exhibition schedule is complicated. Viz.: Mondays, closed. Tuesdays, 10 to 8:45. Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 4:45. Closed Christmas. Sundays and New Year's Day, 11 to 4:45. All right so far? Now then: Through Jan. 2, the exhibit of Russian costumes and the new Egyptian galleries will stay open in the evenings until 7:45, but not, of course, on Mondays, when the museum is closed, or on Wednesday, Dec. 22; Friday, Dec. 24; or Christmas; or Friday, Dec. 31, when the galleries will close at 4:45.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W. 53rd St.—A selection of early-twentieth-century European paintings from Swiss collections features such major artists as Braque, Bonnard, Matisse, Léger, van Gogh, Modigliani, and Klee. Through March 1.... ¶ A hundred prints and a few illustrated books selected from among acquisitions made during the last three years. Through Feb. 20.... ¶ Two hundred and fifty photographs make up a retrospective of the works of Harry Callahan. Through Feb. 8. ... ¶ Photographs by Stephen Shore. Through Jan. 2. (Daily, except Wednesdays and Christmas, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9. Closes Friday, Dec. 24, at 5.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, 1071 Fifth Ave., at 89th St.—A small show of oils and works on paper (all done before 1930) by Piet Mondrian. ... ¶ Frankenthaler, Albers, Newman, and Warhol are four of the artists in an exhibition that surveys American painting since 1945. A separate showing of Arshile Gorky's works (dated 1944-48) is on view. (Tuesdays, 11 to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, except Christmas, 11 to 5.) Both shows through Jan. 16.

WHITNEY MUSEUM, 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St.—"Calder's Universe," a retrospective exhibition that includes samplings from almost every phase of his output—toys, tapestries, tools, graphics, drawings, on up to herculean stabiles as big as the Whitney can accommodate (and excellent photographs of some it can't). Through Jan. 30.... ¶ A historical survey of watercolors and drawings by American artists includes pen-and-ink drawings by Audubon, pastels by Arthur Dove, and watercolors by Mark Rothko. Through Jan. 23. (Tuesdays, 11 to 10, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, except Christmas, 11 to 6; Sundays and New Year's Day, noon to 6.)

WHITNEY DOWNTOWN MUSEUM, 55 Water St., two blocks south of Wall St.—One work from the sixties plus a recent work by each of six artists (Held, Kelly, Martin, Noland, Poons, and Stella) who are closely identified with hard-edge abstraction. Through Jan. 12. (Mondays through Fridays, 11 to 3.)

BROOKLYN MUSEUM, Eastern Parkway—The new quarters for the museum's collection of African objects are now open on the first floor. ... ¶ The twentieth biennial exhibit of contemporary prints, along with works by artists

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who were represented in previous years. Through Jan. 30. (Wednesdays through Saturdays, except Christmas and New Year's Day, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—A new, permanent Hall of the Sun has opened in the Planetarium. Divided into three sections, the exhibit includes an eight-foot globe of the sun and films made of the sun both from earth and from outer space. This exhibit is open Mondays through Fridays, 2 to 5, and Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 5. (Weekdays, except Christmas, 10 to 4:45; Sundays and New Year's Day, 11 to 5.)

American Academy of Arts and Letters, Broadway at 155th St.—The annual Childe Hassam Purchase Exhibition, this year numbering seventy-one entries (of which about twenty will be bought for distribution to American museums) by contemporary painters, among them Nancy Hagin, Benny Andrews, and Hans Moller. . . . ¶ Works from the academy's collection, the earliest dated 1883. John Sloan, Saul Steinberg, and Elihu Vedder are a few of the artists included. (Daily, except Mondays, Christmas, and New Year's Day, 1 to 4.) Both shows through Jan. 2.

China House, 125 E. 65th St.—An exhibit of Chinese folk art, including both utilitarian and decorative objects, dating from the fifteenth century through 1900. Through Jan. 30. (Mondays through Fridays, except Dec. 24, from 10 to 5; Saturdays, except Christmas and New Year's Day, 11 to 5; Sundays, 2 to 5.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—The opening show of the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Design consists of a host of separate exhibits whose theme is the efficacy of design. Through Feb. 6. (Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge; Wednesdays through Saturdays, except Christmas and New Year's Day, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—A retrospective of the work of Ben Shahn, including paintings, prints, posters, drawings, and photographs. Through Jan. 2. (Mondays through Thursdays, noon to 5; Sundays, 11 to 6. Additional hours for this exhibit: Wednesday evenings until 10.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—A hundred and twenty-five drawings from Cambridge University's Fitzwilliam Museum, dating from the sixteenth century through the nineteenth. Among the artists included are Michelangelo, Watteau, Ingres, Goya, and Rubens. Through Feb. 13. (Tuesdays through Saturdays, except Christmas and New Year's Day, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

Museum of American Folk Art, 49 W. 53rd St.—"A Child's Comfort," an exhibit of quilts made from 1830 to the present in sizes to fit infant- and doll-size beds. Through Feb. 4. (Daily, except Mondays, Christmas, and New Year's Day, 10:30 to 5:30. Closes Friday, Dec. 24, and Friday, Dec. 31, at noon.)

New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—An immense showing—more than nine hundred items in all—entitled "Two Hundred Years of American Illustration" and incorporating original works from every celebrated illustrator you've ever heard of—Pyle, Wyeth, Christy, Flagg, Gibson, Dunn, plus a few specials like Audubon, John Held, Jr., and James Thurber. Through Feb. 15. . . . ¶ "The Dutch Republic in the Days of John Adams," a loan show of paintings, furniture (including two room settings), maps and other items that illustrate eighteenth-century Holland. Through Jan. 9. (Tuesdays through Fridays, except Dec. 24 and 31, and Sundays, 1 to 5; Saturdays, except Christmas and New Year's Day, 10 to 5.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—An exhibit of materials recently acquired by the Berg Collection includes correspondence, workbooks, diaries, and manuscripts by such writers as May Sarton, Arthur Conan Doyle, and Joseph Conrad. Through Feb. 11. (Weekdays, except Thursdays, Christmas, and New Year's Day, 10 to 6.)

Studio Museum in Harlem, 2033 Fifth Ave., at 125th St.—Figurative paintings and drawings by Murray DePillars. Through Jan. 9. . . . ¶ Sculptures (bronze and glass) by Geraldine McCullough. Through Jan. 16. (Tuesdays through Fridays, 10 to 6, and Wednesday evenings until 9; Saturdays, except Christmas and New Year's Day, and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

MUSIC

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 580-9830, for Avery Fisher Hall TR 4-2424, and for Carnegie Hall CI 7-7459. Other box-office numbers are included in the listings.)

CHRISTMAS MUSIC

Candlelight Concert—Dino Anagnost directing the Orpheon Chorale, the Cathedral Choir, and members of the American Symphony Orchestra. (Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, 319 E. 74th St. BU 8-3215. Wednesday, Dec. 22, at 7:30.)

Handel's "Messiah"—sing-in at Avery Fisher Hall: With Kenneth Bowen, organ. Robert White, tenor, and John Ostendorf, bass, will appear as soloists, and the audience itself will serve as the chorus. (Thursday, Dec. 23, at 8.). . . **masterwork chorus and orchestra:** David Randolph directing the last in a series of performances, with Sandra Darling, soprano; Grayson Hirst, tenor; Michael May, harpsichord; and others. (Avery Fisher Hall. Sunday, Dec. 26, at 6:30.)

Ensemble for Early Music—A program of medieval and Renaissance music "In Celebration of Christmas." (St. James Chapel, Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. Sunday, Dec. 26, at 2:30. Tickets at the door on the day of the concert.)

Waverly Consort—The last in a series of performances of another program of music from medieval and Renaissance times. (Fuentidueña Apse, The Cloisters, Fort Tryon Park. Sunday, Dec. 26, at 3. For information about tickets, call 923-3700, Ext. 14, Wednesday through Friday.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—Wednesday evening, Dec. 22: "Faust," with Jeannette Pilou, Judith Forst, Stuart Burrows, Lenus Carlson, and Bonaldo Giaiotti; conducted by Georges Prêtre. . . . ¶ Thursday evening, Dec. 23: "Die Zauberflöte," with Benita Valente, Rita Shane, Stuart Burrows, Donald Gramm, John Macurdy, Morley Meredith, and Ragnar Ulfung; James Conlon. . . . ¶ Friday evening, Dec. 24: "Lucia di Lammermoor," with Beverly Sills, John Alexander, Ryan Edwards, and John Macurdy; Richard Woitach. . . . ¶ Saturday matinée, Dec. 25: "Aida," with Martina Arroyo, Tatiana Troyanos, James McCracken, Louis Quilico, Jerome Hines, and Philip Booth; Kazimierz Kord. (A nonsubscription performance.). . . ¶ Saturday evening, Dec. 25: "Tosca," with Grace Melzia Bumbry, Giuseppe Giacomini, Sherrill Milnes, and Renato Capecchi; Nello Santi. . . . ¶ Monday evening, Dec. 27: "Die Zauberflöte," with Benita Valente, Rita Shane, Stuart Burrows, Donald Gramm, John Macurdy, Morley Meredith, and Ragnar Ulfung; James Conlon. . . . ¶ Tuesday evening, Dec. 28: "Lucia di Lammermoor," with Beverly Sills, John Alexander, Ryan Edwards, and John Macurdy; Richard Woitach. . . . ¶ Wednesday evening, Dec. 29: "Salome," with Grace Melzia Bumbry, Barbro Ericson, Ragnar Ulfung, Guillermo Sarabia, Kenneth Riegel, and James Morris; Erich Leinsdorf. . . . ¶ Thursday evening, Dec. 30: "Faust," with Johanna Meier, Judith Forst, Stuart Burrows, Lenus Carlson, and Bonaldo Giaiotti; Georges Prêtre. . . . ¶ Friday evening, Dec. 31: "Lucia di Lammermoor," with Beverly Sills, John Alexander, Ryan Edwards, and John Macurdy; Richard Woitach. (A nonsubscription performance.). . . ¶ Saturday matinée, Jan. 1: "Tosca," with Grace Melzia Bumbry, Giuseppe Giacomini, Sherrill Milnes, and Renato Capecchi; Nello Santi. . . . ¶ Saturday evening, Jan. 1: "Faust," with Johanna Meier, Judith Forst, Stuart Burrows, Lenus Carlson, and Bonaldo Giaiotti; Georges Prêtre. (Evenings at 8. Matinées at 2.)

ORCHESTRAS

New York Philharmonic—At Avery Fisher Hall—Leonard Bernstein directing a varied program on Wednesday, Dec. 22, at 8:30 (with Judith Blegen, soprano; Gwendolyn Killebrew, mezzo-soprano; Kenneth Riegel, tenor; Simon Estes, bass-baritone; and the Westminster Choir). . . . ¶ Andre Kostelanetz conducting a program of Viennese music on Friday, Dec. 31, at 8:30 (with Carol Neblett, soprano); and a varied program on Saturday, Jan. 1, at 8:30 (with David Bar-Illan, piano).

Bach's Brandenburg Concertos—Gerard Schwarz conducting a chamber orchestra. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-6000. Thursday, Dec. 23, at 8.)

New York String Orchestra—Alexander Schneider conducting. (Carnegie Hall. Friday, Dec. 24, at midnight, no soloists; and Wednesday, Dec. 29, at 8, with pianists Eugene Istomin and Yefim Bronfman, violinists Isaac Stern and Schlomo Mintz, and cellist Yo-yo Ma.)

American Symphony Orchestra—Kazuyoshi Akiyama conducting, with Ruggiero Ricci, violin. (Carnegie Hall. Sunday, Dec. 26, at 3.)

RECITALS

Chamber Music at the Y—An all-Mozart program performed by Jaime Laredo and Ani Kavafian, violin; Sharon Robinson, cello; Rudolf Firkusny and Harold Wright, piano; and Walter Trampler, viola. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-6000. Wednesday, Dec. 22, at 8.)

SPORTS

(The box-office number for Madison Square Garden, Eighth Ave. between 31st and 33rd Sts., is 564-4400, and for the Nassau Coliseum, Hempstead Turnpike, Uniondale, L.I., 516 794-9100.)

Professional Basketball—at Madison Square Garden: Knicks vs. Philadelphia, Saturday, Dec. 25, at 8. . . . ¶ Knicks vs. Houston, Tuesday, Dec. 28, at 7:30. . . . ¶ Knicks vs. Cleveland, Saturday, Jan. 1, at 8. . . . **nassau coliseum:** Nets vs. New Orleans, Wednesday, Dec. 22, at 8:05. . . . ¶ Nets vs. Seattle, Wednesday, Dec. 29, at 8:05.

Hockey—at Madison Square Garden (all games at 7:35): Rangers vs. Philadelphia Flyers, Wednesday, Dec. 22. . . . ¶ Rangers vs. Islanders, Sunday, Dec. 26. . . . ¶ Rangers vs. Atlanta Flames, Friday, Dec. 31. . . . **nassau coliseum:** Islanders vs. Vancouver Canucks, Saturday, Jan. 1, at 8:05.

Racing—At **aqueduct:** Weekdays at 12:30; through Saturday, May 21. After Thursday, Dec. 23, there will be no racing until Monday, Jan. 3. The Bold Ruler Handicap, Wednesday, Dec. 22, and the Display Handicap, Thursday, Dec. 23. . . . **laurel,** Md.: Weekdays, except Friday, Dec. 24, and Christmas, at 12:30; through Saturday, Jan. 1.

Trotting—At **yonkers raceway:** Weeknights, except Christmas Eve and Christmas, at 8; through Saturday, Feb. 26. . . . **meadowlands racetrack,** East Rutherford, N.J.: Weeknights, except Christmas Eve and Christmas, at 8; through Saturday, July 30.

ET ALIA

(The New York Parks Department number to call for information about all free entertainment in the city is 472-1003.)

Healthful Outdoor Living—On New Year's Eve, from 10:30 P.M. to 1 A.M., a free party will be given by the city's Department of Cultural Affairs at Bethesda Fountain, in Central Park; music, giant puppets, jugglers, dancers, singers, refreshments (not free), and fireworks are on the agenda.

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

EAST SIDE

Art, 36 E. 8th. (GR 3-7014)
"The Front."

St. Marks Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 8th. (777-1955)
Through Dec. 28: "The Ritz" and "Freebie and the Bean."
From Dec. 29: "Silent Movie" and another feature, to be announced.

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (GR 5-1660)
Through Dec. 23: "The Bad News Bears" and "Smile."
From Dec. 24: "Carrie."

Murray Hill, 160 E. 34th. (685-7652)
"Rocky."

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Voyage of the Damned."

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"The Pink Panther Strikes Again."

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (PL 9-1411)
"Network."

Trans-Lux East, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (PL 9-2262)
Through Dec. 25: "How Funny Can Sex Be?"
From Dec. 26: "All This and World War II."

Fine Arts, 130 E. 58th. (755-6030)
Dec. 22: "Sérail."
From Dec. 23: "The Pink Telephone."

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (EL 5-3320)
"The Seven-Per-Cent Solution."

Baronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Through Dec. 24: "The Front."
From Dec. 25: "A Star Is Born."

Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
"Bound for Glory."

R.K.O. 59th St. Twin 1, 220 E. 59th. (688-1717)
"The Enforcer."

D. W. Griffith, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
Through Dec. 23: "Monty Python and the Holy Grail" and "The Groove Tube."
From Dec. 24: "In Search of Noah's Ark."

Cinema I, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (PL 3-6022)
"The Last Tycoon."

Cinema II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (PL 3-0774)
"Rocky."

Columbia I, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
"Nickelodeon."

Columbia II, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-2720)
"Nickelodeon."

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (RE 7-2622)
"Lumière."

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (RE 4-0302)
"The Marquise of O . . ."

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Silver Streak."

72nd Street East, 1st Ave. at 72nd. (BU 8-9304)
Through Dec. 28: "Silent Movie."
From Dec. 29: "Seven Beauties."

Trans-Lux 85th St., Madison at 85th. (BU 8-3180)
"The Pink Panther Strikes Again."

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"The Enforcer."

Loews Orpheum, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
"King Kong."

Loews Ciné, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (427-1332)
"Voyage of the Damned."

86th St. East, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
"Rocky."

R.K.O. 86th St. Twin 1, Lexington at 86th. (289-8900)
Through Dec. 23: "Ilsa, Harem Keeper of the Oil Sheiks" and "Daughter of Dracula."
From Dec. 24: "The Monkey Hustle."

R.K.O. 86th St. Twin 2, Lexington at 86th. (289-8932)
Dec. 22: "The Texas Chain Saw Massacre" and "Torso."
From Dec. 23: "Pipe Dreams."

WEST SIDE

Waverly, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
"The Enforcer."

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515)
"Marathon Man."

Greenwich, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
"The Pink Panther Strikes Again."

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "The Thief of Paris."
Theatre 2: Through Dec. 23: "The Texas Chain Saw Massacre" and "Torso." From Dec. 24: "The Adventures of Robin Hood" and "Yankee Doodle Dandy."
Theatre 3: Through Dec. 23: "Potemkin" and "Alexander Nevsky." Dec. 24-25: "Things to Come" and "Transatlantic Tunnel." Dec. 26-28: "The General" and "The Gold Rush." Dec. 29-30: "Grand Illusion" and "Pépé le Moko."
Theatre 4: "The Starlets" (X-rated).

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (PL 7-2406)
"Across the Great Divide."

Music Hall, 6th Ave. at 50th. (757-3100)
"The Slipper and the Rose: The Story of Cinderella."

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
Through Dec. 24: Theatre closed.
From Dec. 25: "A Star Is Born."

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (581-2323)
"The Shaggy D.A."

Playboy, 110 W. 57th. (JU 6-4448)
Through Dec. 28: "The Ritz" and "The Prisoner of Second Avenue."
From Dec. 29: To be announced.

Little Carnegie, 146 W. 57th. (246-5123)
"Mikey and Nicky."

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
"Cousin, Cousine."

Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Network."

Cinema Studio, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
To be announced.

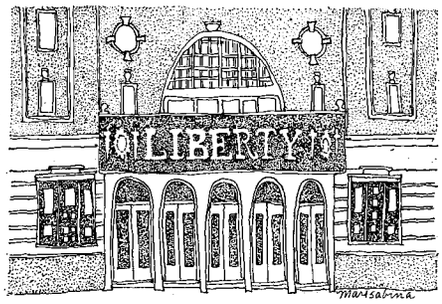
Embassy 72nd St., B'way at 72nd. (SC 4-6745)
Through Dec. 24: "Jonah Who Will Be 25 in the Year 2000" and "Chloé in the Afternoon."
From Dec. 25: "Across the Great Divide."

Loews 83rd Triplex, B'way at 83rd. (877-3190)
Theatre 1: "The Enforcer."
Theatre 2: "The Pink Panther Strikes Again."
Theatre 3: "Marathon Man."

New Yorker, B'way at 88th. (TR 4-9189)
Through Dec. 28: "Murder by Death" and "The Owl and the Pussycat."
From Dec. 29: "The Front."

Olympia, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Through Dec. 23: "The Happy Hooker" and "The Seduction of Mimi."
From Dec. 24: "In Search of Noah's Ark."

THE MOVIE HOUSES



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THE FILMS PLAYING THE REGULAR MOVIE HOUSES ARE DESCRIBED IN BRIEF IN THE SECTION BELOW

REVIVAL HOUSES

(These theatres are showing revivals exclusively, and for abbreviated runs. For reasons of space, or lack of it, only the films marked with a dagger are described in our "In Brief" section, further along.)

Bleecker St. Cinema, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
Through Dec. 24: Theatre closed.
Dec. 25: "Modern Times" (1936) and "City Lights" (1931), both films directed by, and with, Charlie Chaplin.
Dec. 26: "Lawrence of Arabia" (1962), directed by David Lean, with Peter O'Toole, Alec Guinness, Omar Sharif, José Ferrer, and Anthony Quinn.
Dec. 27: "Before the Revolution" (†) and "The Spider's Stratagem." (†)
Dec. 28: "The Lovers" (†) and "The Romantic Englishwoman." (†)
Dec. 29: "Murder, My Sweet" (1945), directed by Edward Dmytryk, with Claire Trevor, Dick Powell, Mike Mazurki, and Anne Shirley; and "Out of the Past." (†)
Dec. 30: "Viridiana" (1961), in Spanish, directed by Luis Buñuel, with Francisco Rabal and Silvia Pinal; and "La Religieuse." (†)

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. at 57th. (757-2131)
Dec. 22: "The Philadelphia Story" (1940), directed by George Cukor, with Katharine Hepburn, James Stewart, and Cary Grant; and "My Favorite Wife" (1940), directed by Garson Kanin, with Irene Dunne, Cary Grant, Gail Patrick, and Randolph Scott.
Dec. 23: "Anna Christie" (1930), directed by Clarence Brown, with Greta Garbo, Charles Bickford, Marie Dressler, and George F. Marion; and "Strange Interlude" (1932), directed by Robert Z. Leonard, with Norma Shearer and Clark Gable.
Dec. 24: "Breakfast at Tiffany's" (1961), directed by Blake Edwards, with Audrey Hepburn, George Peppard, Patricia Neal, Martin Balsam, and Mickey Rooney.
Dec. 25: "The Magic Flute" (1975), in Swedish, directed by Ingmar Bergman; and "The Glass Slipper." (†)
Dec. 26: "Arthur Rubinstein—Love of Life" (†) and "Antonia: A Portrait of the Woman." (†)
Dec. 27: "Escape to Nowhere" (†); and "Le Secret" (1975), in French, directed by Robert Enrico, with Jean-Louis Trintignant, Marlène Jobert, and Philippe Noiret.
Dec. 28: "Grey Gardens" (†) and "Toys in the Attic." (†)
Dec. 29: "Penny Serenade" (†) and "The Howards of Virginia." (†)
Dec. 30: "The Emperor Jones" (†) and "Ah Wilderness!" (†)

Elgin, 8th Ave. at 19th. (675-0935)
"Harold and Maude" (1971), directed by Hal Ashby, with Ruth Gordon and Bud Cort; "Where's Poppa?" (1970), directed by Carl Reiner, with George Segal, Ruth Gordon, and Trish Van Devere; "King of Hearts" (1967), in French and English, directed by Philippe de Broca, with Alan Bates; and "Women in Love" (1970), directed by Ken Russell, with Glenda Jackson, Alan Bates, and Oliver Reed.

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
Through Dec. 25: "Daddy Long Legs" (1955), directed by Jean Negulesco, with Fred Astaire, Leslie Caron, Thelma Ritter, Fred Clark, and Larry Keating.
From Dec. 26: "The Women" (1939), directed by George Cukor, with Norma Shearer, Rosalind Russell, Joan Crawford, and Paulette Goddard; and "Dinner at Eight" (1933), directed by George Cukor, with Jean Harlow, Marie Dressler, and John Barrymore.

R.K.O. 59th St. Twin 2, 220 E. 59th. (688-0750)
Dec. 22: "Elvira Madigan" (1967), in Swedish, directed by Bo Widerberg, with Thommy Berggren and Pia Degermark; and "A Man and a Woman" (1966), in French, directed by Claude Lelouch, with Anouk Aimée and Jean-Louis Trintignant.
Dec. 23-25: "Freaks" (1932), directed by Tod Browning, with Olga Baclanova, Leila Hyams, and Wallace Ford; and "The Mutations" (1974), directed by Jack Cardiff, with Donald Pleasence and Tom Baker.
Dec. 26-27: "Harold and Maude" (1971), directed by Hal Ashby, with Ruth Gordon and Bud Cort; and "Catch-22." (†)
Dec. 28-29: "On the Waterfront" (1954), directed by Elia Kazan, with Marlon Brando, Lee J. Cobb, Eva Marie Saint, Karl Malden, and Rod Steiger; and "The Wild One" (1954), directed by Laslo Benedek, with Marlon Brando, Lee Marvin and Mary Murphy.
From Dec. 30: "Where's Poppa?" (1970), directed by Carl Reiner, with George Segal, Ruth Gordon, and Trish Van Devere; and "Little Murders." (†)

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
Through Dec. 24: Theatre closed.
Dec. 25-27: "It's a Wonderful Life" (†) and "Christmas in July." (†)

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Dec. 28-30: "Nick Carter, Master Detective" (†) and "I Walked with a Zombie." (†)

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St. (956-7078)—Dec. 23 at 2:30: "Alice Adams" (1935), directed by George Stevens, with Katharine Hepburn and Fred MacMurray. ...¶ Dec. 23 at 6 and 8:30: "A Woman of Paris" (1923), directed by Charlie Chaplin, with Edna Purviance and Adolphe Menjou. ...¶ Dec. 24 at 2:30: "Pretty Maids All in a Row" (1971), directed by Roger Vadim, with Rock Hudson, Angie Dickinson, John David Carson, and Telly Savalas. ...¶ Dec. 26 at 2:30: "Play It Again, Sam" (1972), directed by Herbert Ross, with Woody Allen and Diane Keaton. ...¶ Dec. 26 at 5: "Lady Windermere's Fan" (1925), directed by Ernst Lubitsch, with Ronald Colman, May McAvoy, and Irene Rich; and "The Oyster Princess" (1919), directed by Ernst Lubitsch, with Ossi Oswalda, German inter-titles only. ...¶ Dec. 27 at noon: "Duck Soup" (1933), directed by Leo McCarey, with the Marx Brothers and Margaret Dumont. ...¶ Dec. 27 at 2:30: "Paper Moon" (1973), directed by Peter Bogdanovich, with Ryan O'Neal, Tatum O'Neal, and Madeline Kahn. ...¶ Dec. 27 at 6: "Minnie and Moskowitz" (1971), directed by John Cassavetes, with Gena Rowlands and Seymour Cassel. ...¶ Dec. 28 at noon: "The Fuller Brush Man" (1948), directed by S. Sylvan Simon, with Red Skelton and Janet Blair. ...¶ Dec. 28 at 2:30: A program of five short comedies—"Goodness Gracious" (1914), "All Aboard" (1917), "The Butcher Boy" (1917), "The Bond" (1918), and "Big Business" (1929). ...¶ Dec. 30 at 2:30: "Ali Baba Goes to Town" (1937), directed by David Butler, with Eddie Cantor, June Lang, and Tony Martin. ...¶ Dec. 30 at 6: "Something for Everyone" (1970), directed by Harold Prince, with Angela Lansbury and Michael York. ...¶ Dec. 30 at 8:30: "Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Sex" (1973), directed by Woody Allen, with Mr. Allen, Burt Reynolds, and Lynn Redgrave. (A limited number of tickets are available, but only to those applying for them in person at the museum after 11 on the day of the showing. Tickets for the showings at 8:30 will not be accepted before 8.)

Whitney Museum, 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St.—Through Dec. 26: "Regrouping," directed by Lizzie Borden. Showings at noon, 1:30, 3, and 4:30. ...¶ Starting Dec. 28: A video showing by Wendy Clarke. Continuous showings from noon to 5:45 (9:45 on Tuesdays). Call desk (794-0630) for ticket information. Closed Christmas.

Anthology Film Archives, 80 Wooster St. (226-0010)—Programs by Hayeem, Brakhage, Vasulka, Dovzhenko, Dreyer, and others. Showings Dec. 22 at 7 and 9; Dec. 23-24 at 8; Dec. 25 at 2:30 and 8; Dec. 26 at 8; and Dec. 28-30 at 7 and 9.

Film Forum, 15 Vandam St., three blocks south of Houston St., at Sixth Ave. (989-2994)—Starting Dec. 30: "Chulas Fronteras" (1976), directed by Les Blank, and "The Life and Death of Frida Kahlo" (1976), directed by Karen and David Crommie; both films in Spanish and English, with English subtitles. Showings Thursdays through Sundays at 7:30.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN THESE PAGES DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

Across the Great Divide—An adventure film, with Robert Logan and George Flower. Directed by Stuart Raffill. (Guild. ...¶ Embassy 72nd St.; starting Dec. 25.)

The Adventures of Robin Hood (1938)—One of the most popular of all adventure films; stirring for children and intensely nostalgic for adults. With Errol Flynn slinging a deer across his shoulders, almost impossibly pretty Olivia de Havilland as Maid Marian, Alan Hale as Little John, Ian Hunter as Richard the Lion-Hearted, and, for villainy, Basil Rathbone and Claude Rains. Michael Curtiz and William Keighley directed; Erich Wolfgang Korngold did the marvellous score. (Quad Cinema; starting Dec. 24.)

...h Wilderness! (1935)—This piece of ordinary-family-life Americana, centering on the sweet love pangs of adolescence, is so remote from Eugene O'Neill's life and his other work that it's something of a freak. O'Neill said that the play came to him at night, as a dream, but it seems to be a dream based on Booth Tarkington's world. Eric Linden (who always looks as if he's just about to cry) plays the mooning high-school-valedictorian hero in the era of choking starched collars; that cloying old fraud Lionel Barrymore is his father; Wallace Beery is his tippling uncle; and Aline MacMahon and Spring Byington wear neat shirtwaists and make themselves useful about the house. If it sounds Andy Hardyish, it is, and more than a little; in 1948, M-G-M tried to capitalize on the resemblance by starring Mickey Rooney in a musical version of the play, called "Summer Holiday." The musical turned out to be an abomination, but this early version, directed by Clarence Brown, while not a world-shaker, and rather dim as entertainment, has at least a nice sense of period. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; Dec. 30.)

...lexander Nevsky (1938)—Eisenstein's ponderously surging epic has a famous score by Prokofieff and a stunning battle on ice. The plot has something to do with the thirteenth-century invasion of Russia by the German knights; needless to say, the Russians drive the invaders out. The propaganda isn't Communist but nationalist: the medieval story was used to warn Hitler to stay out. With Nikolai Cherkassov as Prince Nevsky. In Russian. (Quad Cinema; through Dec. 23.)

...l This and World War II—A documentary that uses film footage of the war against a background of songs by John Lennon and Paul McCartney—sung by the Bee Gees, Elton John, Helen Reddy, Rod Stewart, and others. Directed by Susan Winslow. (Trans-Lux East; starting Dec. 26.)

...ntonia: A Portrait of the Woman (1974)—A documentary about a lone woman musician, Dr. Antonia Brico, who is a born teacher but also a born conductor; she would like to conduct five times a month but can get engagements only five times a year because of her sex. The film is made with warmth and no propaganda, and it shows us that Dr. Brico has had to overcome a shyness that stood in the way of a longing for the gregarious. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; Dec. 26.)

...rthur Rubinstein—Love of Life (1969)—An exhilarating documentary, winner of an Academy Award, directed by François Reichenbach and S. G. Patris. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; Dec. 26.)

The Bad News Bears—A story of a team of sort of mini-Mets, with Tatum O'Neal as a pitcher, and Walter Matthau as a coach who feeds his team Coke and franks and pours slugs of Scotch into his cans of beer. Michael Ritchie directed, from Bill Lancaster's script. (Gramercy; through Dec. 23.)

Before the Revolution (1965)—A sweepingly romantic movie about a young man's rebellion against bourgeois life and his disillusion with Communism, set in Parma and written and directed by Bernardo Bertolucci at the astonishing age of twenty-two. He captures what has rarely been seen on the screen—the extravagance and poetry of youthful ardor. In Italian. (Bleecker St. Cinema; Dec. 27.)

Bound for Glory—As Woody Guthrie, David Carradine has an ornery intransigence that gives the film a core, and the re-creation of the late thirties is superbly lighted and shot (by Haskell Wexler). There's real love in the director Hal Ashby's staging of the incidents, and the entire film shows good taste and good will. Though it doesn't build dramatically—it straggles just when you want it to soar—it's by no means a negligible piece of work. (Reviewed in our issue of 12/13/76.) (Coronet.)

Carrie—The best scary-funny movie since "Jaws"—a teasing, terrifying, lyrical shocker, directed by Brian De Palma, who has the wickedest baroque sensibility at large in American movies. Pale, gravel-voiced Sissy Spacek gives a classic chameleon performance as a repressed high-school senior whose energy is released only telekinetically, and Piper Laurie plays her deep-voiced, sexy fundamentalist mother. With John Travolta, Nancy Allen, Amy Irving, and William Katt. (11/22/76) (Gramercy; starting Dec. 24.)

Catch-22 (1970)—Mike Nichols' third picture was this hugely ambitious failure, from which his reputation as a film director has never fully recovered; he gave Joseph Heller's novel a grandiloquent staging, and the picture got so Fellini-esque and messagy that the ironies were buried. There's a beautiful flight-tower sequence early on, and there are startling effects and good revue touches here and there, but the picture keeps going on and on, as if it were determined to impress us. With Alan Arkin as Yossarian, Jon Voight, Richard Benjamin, Art Garfunkel, Buck Henry, Martin Balsam, Orson Welles, Robert Balaban, Paula Prentiss, Martin Sheen, Jack Gilford, Peter Bonerz, Charles Grodin, Tony Perkins, Bob Newhart, and, in a particularly offensive scene, Marcel Dalio. The acting of some of the high-ranking officers is so gross that at times one thinks the moral must be that as soon as your rank reaches major, you're a monster. (R.K.O. 59th St. Twin 2; Dec. 26-27.)

Chloé in the Afternoon (1972)—Will the squeamish, married hero (Bernard Verley) break down and go to bed with bohemian Chloé (Zouzou), or won't he? The author-director, Eric Rohmer, a specialist in the eroticism of nonsexual affairs, is a lapidary craftsman who works on a very small scale. This movie is, in its way, just about perfect, but it's minor, and so polished that it practically evaporates a half hour after it's over. In French. (Embassy 72nd St.; through Dec. 24.)

Christmas in July (1940)—Preston Sturges wrote and directed this little slapstick romance when he was just warming up as a director. Dick Powell and Ellen Drew are the young couple whose luck turns when he thinks he's won twenty-five thousand dollars in a slogan contest. It's agreeable enough—it's rather sweet, actually—but it lacks the full-fledged Sturges lunacy. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Dec. 25-27.)

Cousin, Cousine—Jean-Charles Tacchella's cheerful film about a big family and two Rabelaisian apostates within it. In French. (Paris.)

The Emperor Jones (1933)—Eugene O'Neill's play about a black man's disintegration was conceived in a semi-Expressionist style, and it was filmed in that style by Dudley Murphy, from a screenplay by DuBose Heyward. Murphy, a director with some ideas but almost no technique, used painted sets, exaggerated décor, and an artificial jungle; the effects are sometimes powerful, sometimes ridiculous. O'Neill's violent emotions are accurately rendered by Paul Robeson and Dudley Digges, though they seem to be acting on a stage. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; Dec. 30.)

The Enforcer—Clint Eastwood playing Inspector Harry Callahan, for the third time. Directed by James Fargo. (R.K.O. 59th St. Twin 1, U.A. East, Waverly, and Loews 83rd Triplex.)

Escape to Nowhere (1973)—About a stoic spy (Lino Ventura) divided between two loyalties. Today he is Haliakov, a liberal Russian scientist; sixteen years ago he was French. There are moments of tension that rival Hitchcock—at concerts in Geneva and Paris, for instance, or while we wait for the French Secret Service to decode another spy's music manuscript. Directed by Claude Pinoteau, this film (bad title) is a good spy story, and a stingingly alert study in ambiguity. In French. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; Dec. 27.)

Freebie and the Bean (1974)—James Caan and Alan Arkin. There's a beating or a killing or, at least, a yelling scene every couple of minutes in this spoofy slapstick farce, directed by Richard Rush and written by Robert Kaufman. The heroes—cop buddies—seem to have a license to maim and slaughter people. With Valerie Harper, Loretta Swit, Linda Marsh, Jack Kruschen, Mike Kellin, Alex Rocco, and Christopher Morley as a transvestite. (St. Marks Cinema; through Dec. 28.)

The Front—The writer, Walter Bernstein, had a nifty comedy idea—to make a movie about the blacklisting in the entertainment industry during the McCarthy era, centering on a political innocent who fronts for blacklisted writers—but he didn't develop its comic potential. Woody Allen gives the film its only spark in the role of Howie, a restaurant

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

cashier and small-time bookie who becomes a front. But the pacing of the director, Martin Ritt, is off, the sequences don't flow, and the film seems sterile, unpopulated, and flat. (10/4/76) (Art. . . . ¶ Baronet; through Dec. 24. . . . ¶ New Yorker; starting Dec. 29.)

The General (1926)—Buster Keaton at his very greatest, except perhaps for "The Navigator." He did it all himself: stunt jobs, props, script, the lot. The film has all the sweet earnestness in the world. It is about trains, frontier America, flower-faced girls. (Quad Cinema; Dec. 26-28.)

The Glass Slipper (1955)—Leslie Caron as an elfin sweater-girl Cinderella, in an avoidable musical whimsey concocted by Helen Deutsch and directed by Charles Walters. Estelle Winwood is a loony kleptomaniac fairy godmother, Elsa Lanchester is the evil stepmother, Michael Wilding is the prince, Barry Jones his father, and Keenan Wynn his confidant. There are a couple of ballets choreographed by Roland Petit. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; Dec. 25.)

The Gold Rush (1925)—Chaplin is the helpless perfect gentleman in the world of Klondike bears and Klondike brutes. One of the great comedies of all time. With Mack Swain as Big Jim, and Georgia Hale as the girl Charlie wins. (Quad Cinema; Dec. 26-28.)

Grand Illusion (1937)—The subtle barriers of class among a group of prisoners and their captors during the First World War. With Erich von Stroheim, Jean Gabin, Pierre Fresnay, and Marcel Dalio. Jean Renoir directed this great elegy for the death of the old European aristocracy, and it is one of the true masterpieces of the screen. In French. (Quad Cinema; Dec. 29-30.)

Grey Gardens—The Maysles brothers' film of Edith Bouvier Beale and her daughter, Edie, in their decaying East Hampton mansion. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; Dec. 28.)

The Groove Tube (1974)—Inoffensively scatological revue, lampooning TV, Kubrick's "2001," and American culture. About half of the scattershot, manic skits are very funny; the others might have been funny, too, if their timing had been better. At the end, the talented director and star, Ken Shapiro, does a lovely, flaked-out dance through rush-hour crowds along Park Avenue. (D. W. Griffith; through Dec. 23.)

The Happy Hooker (1975)—With Lynn Redgrave as Xaviera Hollander. Directed by Nick Sgarro. (Olympia; through Dec. 23.)

The Howards of Virginia (1940)—Cary Grant, miscast as a rough-hewn surveyor at the time of the American Revolution. Costume pictures were never his forte, and he gives one of his rare really bad performances in this one. Martha Scott is the highborn woman he courts; Cedric Hardwicke is her proud, aristocratic brother. The script, by Sidney Buchman, from Elizabeth Page's novel "The Tree of Liberty," also saddles Grant with a crippled son, whom he rejects until the maudlin end, when his son's bravery wins him over. Glimpses of Jefferson (Richard Carlson), Washington (George Houston), and Patrick Henry (Richard Gaines) provide a cultural note without adding much to the party. Frank Lloyd directed; some scenes were filmed in Williamsburg. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; Dec. 29.)

How Funny Can Sex Be?—An eight-episode film, with Giancarlo Giannini and Laura Antonelli, directed by Dino Risi. In Italian. (Trans-Lux East; through Dec. 25.)

Ilsa, Harem Keeper of the Oil Sheiks—With Dyanne Thorne, directed by Don Edmonds. (R.K.O. 86th St. Twin 1; through Dec. 23.)

It's a Wonderful Life (1946)—Frank Capra's best-sustained piece of sentimentality after the war (though the postwar public wasn't in the Capra mood, and the picture didn't catch on). James Stewart is the man on the brink of suicide who is given a vision of what life would be like for his family and his town if he had never been born. Donna Reed plays his wife, and the excruciatingly familiar cast includes Lionel Barrymore, Thomas Mitchell, Henry Travers, Beulah Bondi, Ward Bond, H. B. Warner, Gloria Grahame, and Samuel S. Hinds. In its own icky, bittersweet way, it's terribly effective. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Dec. 25-27.)

I Walked with a Zombie (1943)—Horror picture, directed by Jacques Tourneur, about witchcraft and voodoo running wild in Haiti. The script was derived from, of all things, "Jane Eyre." The heroine is the victim of a mysterious malady that has left her a speechless catatonic. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Dec. 28-30.)

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Jonah Who Will Be 25 in the Year 2000—A whirling political comedy about the seventies' lunatic fringe of people in their twenties and thirties, each with his own answers to the problems of society. The director, Alain Tanner, and his co-writer, John Berger, are willing to entertain possibilities for social rebirth even if they're cracked or pickled. This picture has a miraculous combination of irony and wit, like Buñuel's "The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie." With Miou-Miou, Jean-Luc Bideau, and Raymond Bussières. In French. (10/18/76) (Embassy 72nd St.; through Dec. 24.)

King Kong—With Jeff Bridges, Charles Grodin, and Jessica Lange; directed by John Guillermin. (Loews Orpheum.)

The Last Tycoon—Harold Pinter adapted Fitzgerald's unfinished novel about Hollywood, and Elia Kazan directed the picture, which was produced by Sam Spiegel and stars Robert De Niro as Monroe Stahr. With Jack Nicholson, Tony Curtis, Robert Mitchum, Jeanne Moreau, Ray Milland, Donald Pleasence, and Dana Andrews. The result is so enervated that it's like a vampire movie after the vampires have left. (11/29/76) (Cinema I.)

Little Murders (1971)—Jules Feiffer's satirical comedy about urban decay and living between assassinations was turned into something fairly gross in its movie version, directed by Alan Arkin. Elliott Gould is the catatonic hero. (R.K.O. 59th St. Twin 2; starting Dec. 30.)

The Lovers (1959)—The romantic sex film that made Jeanne Moreau infamously famous. As a modern-day Emma Bovary, she makes love very elegantly in water—maybe because the director, Louis Malle, was once Jacques-Yves Cousteau's assistant. In French. (Bleecker St. Cinema; Dec. 28.)

Lumière—Jeanne Moreau wrote, directed, and stars in this elevated daydream about the life of an actress. The picture is delicately dissociated; it nibbles around the edges of its subject. And it shares a weakness of many other high-flown junk movies: it is less interested in pace than in culture. In French. (12/20/76) (Beekman.)

Marathon Man—William Goldman's book—a visceral thriller about a Nazi ring of thieves in New York—seemed a lead-pipe cinch to make audiences almost sick with excitement (the way "The French Connection" did); it's "Death Wish" with a lone Jewish student (played by Dustin Hoffman) getting his own back from the Nazis. But the director, John Schlesinger, opts for so much frazzled cross-cutting that there isn't the clarity needed for suspense. The only emotion one is likely to feel is revulsion at the brutality and general unpleasantness. With Laurence Olivier, Roy Scheider, and Marthe Keller. (10/11/76) (8th St. Playhouse, and Loews 83rd Triplex.)

The Marquise of O . . .—Eric Rohmer's word-for-word, gesture-for-gesture transcription of the 1808 Heinrich von Kleist novella manages to miss the spirit just about completely. A bold, funny story becomes a formal, tame film—it's like a historical work re-created for educational television. Edith Clever is skilled and likable as the Marquise, but the droopy Bruno Ganz is miscast as the rapist Count. In German. (10/25/76) (68th St. Playhouse.)

Mikey and Nicky—With Peter Falk and John Cassavetes, directed by Elaine May. (Little Carnegie.)

The Monkey Hustle—With Yaphet Kotto and Ruby Ray Moore, directed by Arthur Marks. (R.K.O. 86th St. Twin 1; starting Dec. 24.)

Monty Python and the Holy Grail (1975)—A cheerfully loused-up reworking of the story of King Arthur, written and acted by the Python team, who were first famous on English TV and then picked up a devoted following here. (5/5/75) (D. W. Griffith; through Dec. 23.)

Murder by Death—A thriller thronged with the world's most famous detectives, written by Neil Simon, directed by Robert Moore. A funny night of a hundred stars, with Truman Capote as the host, a carefully spoken blind butler played by Alec Guinness, and Maggie Smith, never more limp-wristed or full of sophisticated common sense. Estelle Winwood plays the nurse of a Miss Marbles, but the nurse is the one in the wheelchair. (6/28/76) (New Yorker; through Dec. 28.)

Network—Television, Paddy Chayefsky says, is turning us into morons and humanoids; people have lost the ability to love. Who has—him? Oh, no, the blacks, the revolutionaries, and a power-hungry executive at the fictional UBS network named Diana Christensen (Faye Dunaway). The cast of this messianic farce includes William Holden, Peter Finch, Robert Duvall, and Ned Beatty, and they all take turns yelling at us soulless masses. Sidney Lumet directed. (12/6/76) (Sutton, and Paramount.)

Nick Carter, Master Detective (1939)—Undistinguished is putting it kindly. Walter Pidgeon as the detective, and Donald Meek as his bee-keeping assistant, Bartholomew. Directed by Jacques Tourneur. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Dec. 28-30.)

Nickelodeon—With Ryan O'Neal, Burt Reynolds, Tatum O'Neal, and Brian Keith; directed by Peter Bogdanovich. (Columbia I, and Columbia II.)

Out of the Past (1947)—A thin but well-shot suspense melodrama, kept from collapsing by the suggestiveness and intensity that the director, Jacques Tourneur, pours on. It's empty trash, but you do keep watching it. Kirk Douglas, a gangster, hires Robert Mitchum to find Jane Greer, who has run away from him. Predictably, she gets Mitchum (at his most somnolent-sexy droopy-eyed) in her clutches, and there are several killings before matters are resolved. The screenplay is by Geoffrey Homes (a pseudonym of Daniel Mainwaring), from his novel "Build My Gallows High." With Rhonda Fleming. (Bleecker St. Cinema; Dec. 29.)

The Owl and the Pussycat (1970)—A raucous romance, with Barbra Streisand and George Segal as sparring partners. They both win. Streisand can ring more changes on a line than anybody since W. C. Fields, and Segal has the steadying grace that Tracy used to supply for Hepburn. Herbert Ross directed. (New Yorker; through Dec. 28.)

Penny Serenade (1941)—Irene Dunne and Cary Grant, who had made audiences laugh in "The Awful Truth" and "My Favorite Wife," jerked tears this time. They play a childless couple who adopt an infant, learn to love it, as well as feed it and bathe it, and then lose it. The director, George Stevens, dragged his feet (the picture is over two hours long) and he wasn't very subtle, yet he respected the sentimental story and made it convincing to a wide audience; many people talk about this picture as if it had really been deeply moving. With Edgar Buchanan and Beulah Bondi; the screenplay is by Morrie Ryskind. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; Dec. 29.)

Pépé le Moko (1937)—Superb entertainment. A classic romantic tragedy of the thirties, and one of the most compelling of all French films, yet seen by few Americans because it was remade in Hollywood two years later as "Algiers," starring Charles Boyer and "introducing" Hedy Lamarr. "Algiers" was so closely copied from "Pépé le Moko" that look-alikes were cast in many of the roles, and some sequences were followed shot by shot, but "Algiers" is glamorous pop that doesn't compare to the original, directed by Julien Duvivier and starring Jean Gabin as the gangster who finds love but can't find his freedom. No one who saw "Pépé" is likely to forget the scene in which the homesick-for-Paris Gabin looks at a Métro ticket and recites the names of the stations. With Mireille Balin, Marcel Dalio, Gaston Modot, Gabriel Gabrio, and Charpin. In French. (Quad Cinema; Dec. 29-30.)

The Pink Panther Strikes Again—The fourth in the series, with Peter Sellers as Chief Inspector Clouseau (he's had a promotion) and Herbert Lom as Chief Inspector Dreyfus. Blake Edwards directed. (Eastside Cinema, Trans-Lux 85th St., Greenwich, and Loews 83rd Triplex.)

The Pink Telephone—With Mireille Darc, Michel Lonsdale, and Pierre Mondy; directed

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by Edouard Molinaro. In French. (Fine Arts; starting Dec. 23.)

Pipe Dreams—The story takes place in Alaska. With Gladys Knight (in a non-singing role) and Barry Hankerson, directed by Stephen F. Verona. (R.K.O. 86th St. Twin 2; starting Dec. 23.)

Potemkin (1925)—In 1950, an international panel of critics voted this Eisenstein film "the greatest film of the past fifty years." The subject is the 1905 mutiny of the sailors of the battleship Potemkin and the massacre of the people who sympathized with them. Eisenstein made the subject exciting by rhythmic editing—"montage." Silent, with added musical sound track. (Quad Cinema; through Dec. 23.)

The Prisoner of Second Avenue (1975)—Jack Lemmon, as a New York advertising executive, gets fired, feels worthless, and has a nervous breakdown; Anne Bancroft is his devoted wife. Vaguely about urban despair, full of bad jokes. Melvin Frank directed the movie version of Neil Simon's sit-com. (3/10/75) (Playboy; through Dec. 28.)

La Religieuse ("The Nun;" 1965)—Anna Karina plays Diderot's mid-eighteenth-century nun, boxed into a convent to save her parents the cost of her marriage dowry and the embarrassment of her illegitimacy. Directed by Jacques Rivette. Slow, stately, suffocating stuff, full of images to inspire high-bred dread in atheists and claustrophobics, and entirely missing the point that Diderot's novel is funny. In French. (Bleecker St. Cinema; Dec. 30.)

The Ritz—From Terrence McNally's play, directed by Richard Lester. We are in a New York City bathhouse where homosexuals hang out. A rococo-Mafia atmosphere reigns, and McNally's dialogue is barbarously funny. (8/23/76) (St. Marks Cinema, and Playboy; through Dec. 28.)

Rocky—A low-budget winner—a romantic fable about a Philadelphia palooka who gains his manhood, written by and starring muscle-bound Sylvester Stallone, who is repulsive one moment, noble the next. The picture is poorly made, yet its naive, emotional shamelessness is funny and engaging. John G. Avildsen directed; with Talia Shire, Carl Weathers, Burt Young, and Burgess Meredith. (11/29/76) (Murray Hill, Cinema II, and 86th St. East.)

The Romantic Englishwoman (1975)—Michael Caine is the pulp-writer husband, and Glenda Jackson is the discontented wife, and this is another flaccid essay on infidelity, with prissy-mouthed Helmut Berger as the gigolo-intruder. The director, Joseph Losey, persuaded Tom Stoppard to do the rewrite on Thomas Wiseman's adaptation of his own novel, and Stoppard has given the dialogue a few Noël Cowardish bitch-nifties, but not enough to keep the viewer's blood coursing. It's a mystification melodrama with leftish overtones; the title is ironic—the film's oblique message is that the bourgeois wife consumes everything, even her lover. (12/8/75) (Bleecker St. Cinema; Dec. 28.)

The Seduction of Mimi (1972)—Written and directed by Lina Wertmüller. A farce, set in Italy and Sicily, about a sexual round robin, with the Mafia intervening. The hero is dead serious, above a subterranean freneticism, about his cold wife in Sicily and his Cranach-faced mistress in Turin and Catania. His wife vengefully gets pregnant by a tax officer; the hero makes love back to the tax officer's mountainous wife, who already has five children before this sixth one by him. The Mafia plants a murder on him, and he emerges from a jail sentence to find even his mistress and their beloved growing son disappearing into the distance. In Italian. (Olympia; through Dec. 23.)

Sérail—With Leslie Caron and Bulle Ogier, directed by Eduardo de Gregorio. In French. (Fine Arts; Dec. 22.)

Seven Beauties—Lina Wertmüller's Everyman jamboree, full of garbled ideas, cruelty, moist wistfulness, pious moralizing, and appeals to coarse prejudices. With Giancarlo Giannini. In Italian. (2/16/76) (72nd Street East; starting Dec. 29.)

The Seven-Per-Cent Solution—A civilized light entertainment, with Nicol Williamson's Sherlock Holmes and Alan Arkin's Sigmund Freud pooling their deductive skills to solve the mysterious kidnapping of one of Freud's patients (Vanessa Redgrave). Chief among the performers, who seem to be having an actors' holiday, is Laurence Olivier, in high form as the criminal mastermind Prof. Moriarty; the others include Robert Duvall as Dr. Watson, Joel Grey, Anna Quayle, Samantha Eggar, Georgia Brown, Jeremy Kemp, and Charles Gray. Nicholas Meyer adapted his 1974 best-seller; Herbert Ross directed. (11/1/76) (Plaza.)

The Shaggy D.A.—From the Disney studios, with Dean Jones, Tim Conway, and Suzanne Pleshette. Directed by Robert Stevenson. (Festival.)

Silent Movie—Mel Brooks's intermittently very funny film, in which Mel Brooks (as Mel Funn), Dom DeLuise (as Dom Bell), and Marty Feldman (as Marty Eggs) try to beat a readily identifiable conglomerate called Engulf & Devour by making a silent movie—this is 1976. Much joy for children, but the humor is a bit burly, and one misses Madeline Kahn. (7/12/76) (72nd Street East; through Dec. 28. . . . ¶ St. Marks Cinema; starting Dec. 29.)

Silver Streak—Some studio executive must have looked at the script, seen that most of the action was on board the train from Los Angeles to Chicago, and said, "Who the hell travels by train?" The movie starts by offering excuses for why the characters are on board. Jill Clayburgh, Gene Wilder, and Richard Pryor are nineteen-seventies performers trapped in this fake thirties mystery-comedy, which is so inept you can't even get angry: it's like the imitations of sophisticated entertainment that high-school kids put on. Pryor wakes things up when he's expressing utter disbelief in Wilder's white way of moving, but when Pryor is required to show pure-hearted affection for Wilder you have never seen such a bad actor. The villains are art forgers. (Has there ever been a good movie about art forgery? The idea is even more hopeless than having an amnesiac hero.) Arthur Hiller directed, lamely; Colin Higgins wrote the script, which features pathetic double entendres. This movie also includes a callously unfunny gag—a plane buzzing a flock of sheep. (Loews Tower East.)

The Slipper and the Rose: The Story of Cinderella—With Richard Chamberlain as the prince, Gemma Craven as Cinderella, Annette Crosbie as the fairy godmother, Dame Edith Evans as the dowager queen, and Margaret Lockwood as the stepmother. Directed by Bryan Forbes. (Music Hall.)

Smile (1975)—A fresh, mussed-up comedy about the California finals of a national "Young American Miss" contest. A cousin to "Lord Love a Duck," the film is an affectionate satirical salute to the square; though we laugh at the gaffes of the rawboned teen-age girls, the laughter isn't cruel. Bruce Dern plays the chief judge, a booster who talks in homilies that express exactly how he feels; he's a donkey, but he doesn't have a mean bone in his body. With Barbara Feldon as the girls' den mother, Michael Kidd as the choreographer brought in to stage the beauty pageant, and several talented new actresses—Maria O'Brien, Joan Prather, and Annette O'Toole. Michael Ritchie's direction is highly variable in quality, but he's a whiz at catching details of frazzled behavior. The script is by Jerry Belson. (10/6/75) (Gramercy; through Dec. 23.)

The Spider's Stratagem (1970)—Before he made "The Conformist," Bernardo Bertolucci made this adaptation of Jorge Luis Borges's enigmatic "Theme of the Traitor and Hero" for Italian television. Shot in Sabbioneta, a miniature city between Mantua and Parma, with colonnades that suggest de Chirico, the film is mysteriously beautiful; it has heightened colors and evocative imagery. But Giulio Brogi, playing both the son and the hero-father whose death the son is investigating, is given no character as either, and he lacks energy. The film itself is enervated, and the themes are frustratingly elusive; it's all atmosphere and no strength. With Alida Valli, still splendidly handsome, and with that same secret look she had in "The Third Man." In Italian. (Bleecker St. Cinema; Dec. 27.)

A Star Is Born—This time around, the story is a musical, with Barbra Streisand and Kris Kristofferson, directed by Frank Pierson. (Baronet, and Ziegfeld; starting Dec. 25.)

The Texas Chain Saw Massacre (1974)—With Marilyn Burns, directed by Tobe Hopper. (R.K.O. 86th St. Twin 2; Dec. 22. . . . ¶ Quad Cinema; through Dec. 23.)

The Thief of Paris (1967)—Jean-Paul Belmondo in a very fine account by Louis Malle of the state of mind of a nihilist thief in late-nineteenth-century France. This thief hates the bourgeoisie, yet is so successful he becomes part of it. With Geneviève Bujold. Photographed by the great Henri Decae. In French. (Quad Cinema.)

Things to Come (1936)—The most elaborate science-fiction movie ever made in England until "2001." H. G. Wells wrote the tendentious screenplay, the celebrated designer William Cameron Menzies directed, Georges Périnal was the cinematographer, and Arthur Bliss wrote the score. It's a handsome movie, with great costumes and some wonderful howlers in Raymond Massey's and Ralph Richardson's dialogue and acting. (Quad Cinema; Dec. 24-25.)

Torso (1975)—With Suzy Kendall and Tina Aumont, directed by Sergio Martino. (R.K.O. 86th St. Twin 2; Dec. 22. . . . ¶ Quad Cinema; through Dec. 23.)

Toys in the Attic (1963)—One of those unflinching movies in which a family that is "living a lie" suddenly finds its glass house crashing down in a crescendo of furious accusation. ("You never really loved me. . . . It was Jed, your own father, you really wanted. . . . Go on, say it.") The main characters in this adaptation of Lillian Hellman's play are an incestuous trio of two sisters (Geraldine Page and Wendy Hiller) and a brother (Dean Martin). Page has considerable brio, but her transitions from fluttering Dixie charm to obsidian cruelty are confusingly melodramatic; Hiller has the trembling-lip role; and the miscast Dean Martin is more wooden than ever before or since. They're all at work against a crippling dramatic deadline: they have to exhibit the faults in their characters almost at once so that the "powerful" finale will come off. George Roy Hill directed; with Yvette Mimieux and Gene Tierney. (Carnegie Hall Cinema; Dec. 28.)

Transatlantic Tunnel (1935)—Though actually a remake of a much better German sci-fi adventure film, this melodramatic English production, directed by Maurice Elvey, has some memorable and gripping sequences once it gets under way—which takes a while. The title tells the story: it's about trying to drive a tunnel under the Atlantic, with all the floods and eruptions imaginable. Iron-jawed Richard Dix, one of the most likable early screen stars, is the lead, with Madge Evans opposite him. (Quad Cinema; Dec. 24-25.)

Voyage of the Damned—This movie is based on the actual 1939 voyage of the S.S. St. Louis with nine hundred and thirty-seven German-Jewish refugees aboard, yet there is not a single moment in the star-packed epic that carries any conviction. As the lines drone on—paced with a sledgehammer—you may feel you could die for a little overlapping dialogue. But with this material you can't even have the frivolous pleasure of derision. Seeing Faye Dunaway cast as a Jewish woman who can't turn on her husband, you should be able to laugh, but how can you? (Dunaway must have decided that she'd better give the public *something*, and she comes on looking absolutely smashing, and at one point appears dressed hilariously inappropriately, wearing black boots and a monocle.) As the ship's captain, Max von Sydow acts with some distinction; most of the others—Oskar Werner, Malcolm McDowell, Katharine Ross, Janet Suzman, Maria Schell, Victor Spinetti, Julie Harris, Wendy Hiller, Orson Welles, James Mason, et al.—are crippled by the banal lines, written by Steve Shagan and David Butler, and the atrocious direction of Stuart Rosenberg. (34th St. East, and Loews Ciné.)

Yankee Doodle Dandy (1942)—The astonishingly versatile James Cagney as George M. Cohan in a big, enjoyable musical well directed by Michael Curtiz. With Walter Huston. (Quad Cinema; starting Dec. 24.)

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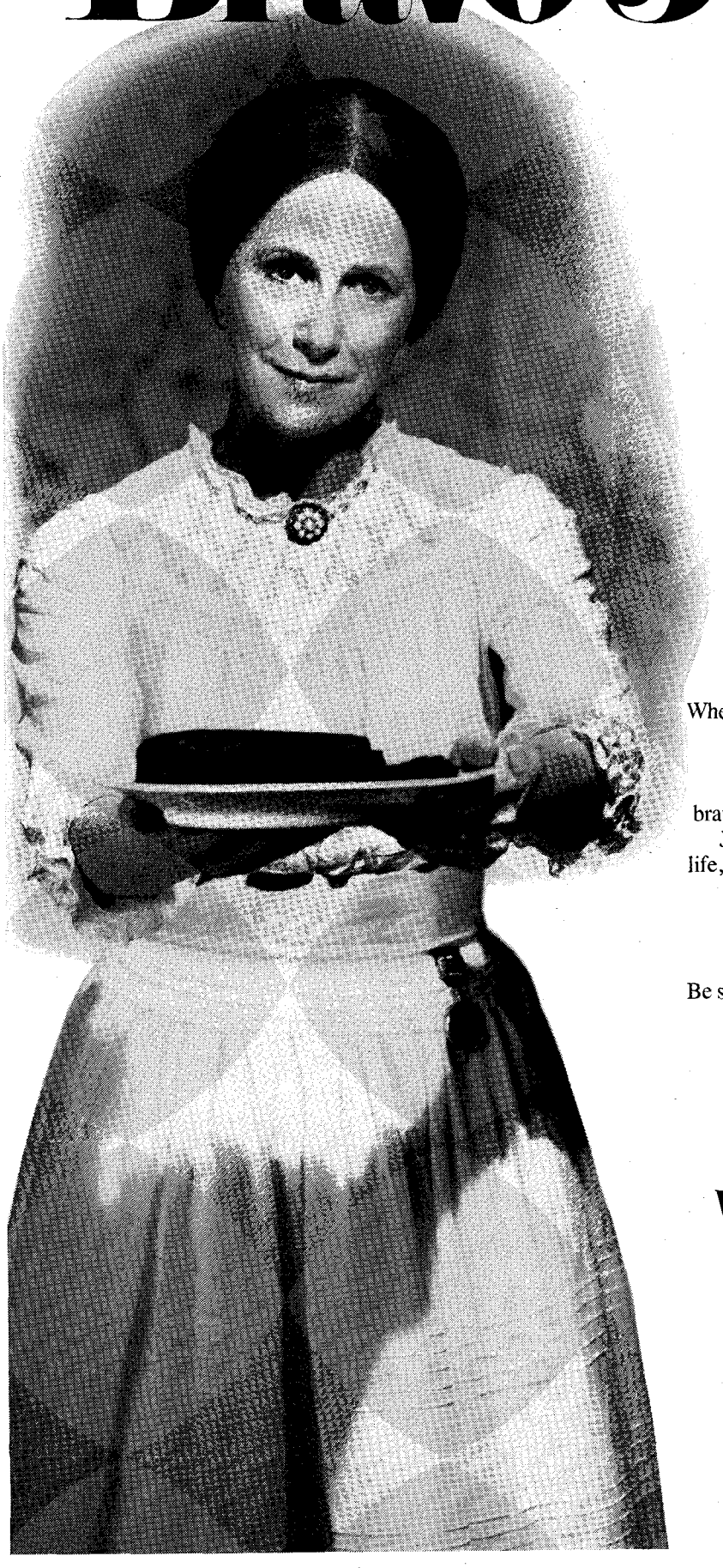

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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

EVERY year at this time, we find ourself shunning like mad the wisdom of the Greek axiom "Μηδὲν ἄγαν"—"Nothing too much," or "Nothing in excess." "Everything in excess" is our personal belief concerning Christmastime. Everybody overdo. There can't be too many plum puddings to suit us, too many expensive gifts, too many Christmas carols, too much wassail, or enough tawdry tree ornaments, garish department-store displays, noisy street-corner Santas—we're absolutely in favor of Buy Now, Pay Later (since we'll always have to pay), and having an excessively good time. There's a popular tendency every year to knock Christmas for beginning too soon, going on too long, and costing too much—that is, for just being itself, which *is* Too Much. We started wondering if we were right about this when we noticed that we were feeling dizzy and out of breath as we rushed in the cold from Bloomingdale's to F. A. O. Schwarz (concerning which at Christmastime the wisest and, happily, the most disregarded advice is the same as that given by a young Watergate defendant when he was asked what he'd tell his peers to do concerning Washington politics: "Stay away"), and so we phoned Ricky for a quiet chat. Ricky is the grandson of a man who, in the true Christmas spirit of vulgarity, annually maintained at least seven overdecorated Yule trees (one of them homemade from old coat hangers), and is also our favorite nine-year-old. "Is it really worth wearing ourself out like this, Ricky?" we asked. "What, in your mind, is all this fuss about?"

"Well . . . let me see," he said, thinking it over. (His father is a lawyer.) "Oh, I know. It's to celebrate a birth—the birth of the Christ child," he continued casually, and he was prepared to talk presents, but we wouldn't let him.

"But that happened two thousand years ago, in a foreign country. Isn't there some other reason—some universal something *else* about Christmas that has got your mother baking three times as many cookies as your family can eat?"

"Oh, you mean the *symbolic* meaning," said this garrulous child, whose parents are throwing away thousands and thousands of dollars in school fees to make him even smarter. "Let's see. The spirit of Christmas—well, it's about birth, all right. To me, Christmas is—the birth of the world!" he ended exuberantly.

Feeling a little like the guy who shot the last wild passenger pigeon, we sought to bring him down out of the clouds a bit. "Well, Ricky, isn't there something about Christmas that you like best? What's the nicest thing about Christmas morning?"

"Oh. Yeah. 'The spirit of Christmas is the spirit of giving,' " said Ricky, trying to sound as if he really meant it. But before we could interrupt he went on, lowering his voice, "Between you and me, what I like *best* of all is the presents. But I really like giving, too. Do you need to know any more?"

No, we didn't, but try and stop a young man with a vision, so Ricky began to tell us what kind of presents he would love, but didn't expect, to get—expensive, brand-name items deliberately manufactured to appeal to the greed and the willingness to risk which possess the heart of every grasping, calculating nine-year-old—until we cried "Enough!" for the first time since Thanksgiving.

Now we knew what Christmas really is—a birthday party for the world. "But do we like the world well enough to want to celebrate it this way—does the world deserve a party?" we asked ourself as we cut our fingers on a broken glass globe that was put away with the good ones last year. "And, since the world includes us, isn't it indecent to be going to such lengths to throw a party for ourself?" we muttered, struggling with a cranky three-legged Christmas-tree holder—the kind that always lets you fasten in two but not three of the screws that are supposed to keep the tree from listing. "But isn't it ridiculous to be so overactive at the very time of year when right-thinking mammals try to slow up and stay warm?" we went on angrily, and we hurried into the teeth of the gale with a batch of last-minute Christmas cards, so we could catch the 4 P.M. pickup at our corner mailbox. Then we began to answer ourself. "No, because the world includes Ricky, too, and every child knows that his own birthday is the most important day of the year, and has to be celebrated with candles and cakes and prizes and singing and games and cards and funny hats. Furthermore," we

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"No kidding? Do you really think I'm as flamboyant as Pat Moynihan?"

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said, as much to Ricky as to ourself, "every child *is* important and deserves a party, and a world safe for children would be an even better place than one that is merely safe for democracy." And then we came back to the important question of what Ricky wants, which is the whole world, and what he will get, and we trembled to think. Then we had to stop thinking and get busy, rush around, overdo, consume conspicuously, and quite possibly yield to the temptation to buy Ricky that three-hundred-dollar pinball machine in the most expensive, biggest, and most crowded toy store we could find.

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Blues

TOM WAITS is a twenty-six-year-old composer and performer who looks like an urban scarecrow. He wears a ratty black cap pulled down over his left eye, a coat that is simultaneously too big and too small, paper-thin pointy black shoes, and a couple of days' worth of beard. He appears to have slept in a barrel. His voice is a scabrous rasp, which can become—onstage—an effective instrument, with a wide range of color and feeling. His lyrics reflect a landscape that is bleak, lonely, contemporary: all-night diners; cheap hotels; truck stops; pool halls; strip joints; Continental Trailways buses; double-knits; full-table rail shots; jumper cables; Naugahyde luncheonette booths; Foster Grant wraparounds; hashbrowns over easy; glasspacks and overhead cams; dawn skies "the color of Pepto-Bismol." His songs—mostly blues—are not everybody's cup of Instant Nestea, but they range from raunchy to beautiful. His fourth album, "Small Change," recently appeared, and one song in it, called "Tom Traubert's Blues," is extraordinarily moving.

We went out to Roslyn, Long Island, early on a Friday night to see Waits perform at a club called My Father's Place. It was next to an overpass of Northern Boulevard; with heavy traffic moving eastward above, it was a setting as melancholy as one of Waits's blues. The empty club was low-ceilinged and black-walled; chairs for about four hundred sat upside down on long, narrow tables under dull-yellow lights. A man dollied cases of liquor by; a couple of waitresses at a table stacked with menus were writing in "Pizza $3.50" on each. On a stage in one corner, Waits and his band—bass player, drummer, and sax—were running a sound check, playing fragments of songs. Red and blue spotlights came on, went off. Waits was bent over the keyboard of the piano, a cigarette jiggling from his jaw. "There's no presence," the sax player complained into his mike. Waits, speaking into his mike, said, "Darken the sax." Men started putting the chairs on the floor: slam, crash, jangle. A spotlight cut across the room, hovered on the stage, went out. Waits stepped down from the stage. Because he was wearing black clothes in the dark club, only the small orange glow of his cigarette indicated his whereabouts.

The first show was a full house, and it went very well. Waits included one of his new songs, "Step Right Up," which is a high-speed scat assemblage of unrelated sales pitches ("You, too, can be the proud owner of the quality goes in before the name goes on . . . year-end clearance . . . white sale . . . smoke-damaged furniture you can drive it away today . . . never needs winding"), and did a couple of encores.

Between shows, we went down to a basement room and found Waits seated at a table having a beer. He is a private sort of person, older than his years; skinny, angular, and long-faced; reflective eyes in the shadow of his cap brim. He smiled and growled a pleasant greeting, and told us he was a high-school dropout from Los Angeles and San Diego. His parents were teachers. "When I was in school, I was in trouble a lot. Conflict with teachers. Malicious mischief. I got no sympathy from my folks, being teachers themselves. I was wasted all day, because I worked in a restaurant until four in the morning. I was dishwasher, waiter, cook, janitor, plumber—everything. They called me Speed-O-Flash. Sundays, I'd come in at 6 A.M. and wash, buff, and wax the floors. There was a good jukebox—played 'Cryin' Time' and 'I Can't Stop Loving You.' We had an

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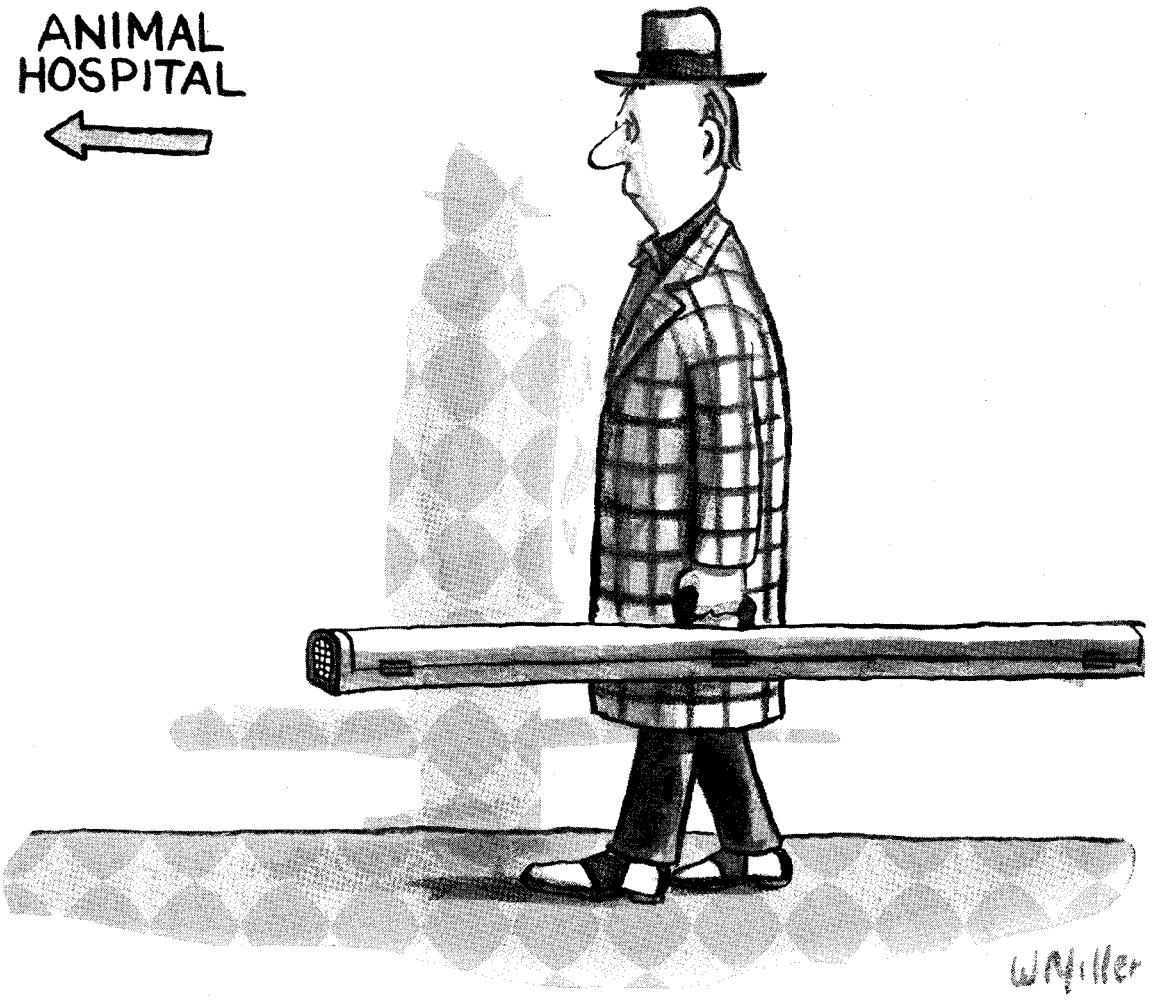
old piano in our house, but I wouldn't go near it. Scared me. When I was about seventeen, they threw it away, and I put it in the garage. I was an investigator at the keyboard. I was curious about melody. If I wanted to learn a key, I'd write a melody in that key. I went to a predominantly black junior high school in San Diego, where the only music was black hit parade—James Brown, the Supremes, Wilson Pickett—but by then I'd had a lot of incongruous musical influences: jazz, Gershwin, Porter, Kern, Arlen, Carmichael, Mercer, Louis Armstrong, Stravinsky, Reverend Gary Davis, Mississippi John Hurt. During the height of rock and roll, I kept a low profile. I used to read Hubert Selby, Kerouac, Larry McMurtry, John Rechy, Nelson Algren. My reading now is mostly limited to menus and street signs. I liked comedians and storytellers: Wally Cox, Harry the Hipster, Rodney Dangerfield, Redd Foxx, Lord Buckley. I worked in a gas station, didn't do major repairs—Mrs. Ferguson would come in and want her tires rotated; kids want a dollar's worth; fill 'er up; ding, ding—and I worked in a jewelry store, drove delivery trucks, cabs, a Tropic ice-cream truck. Was a firefighter in a town near the Mexican border—brush fires, mostly. Drank coffee, played checkers, looked at *Playboy*, threw darts. Then I got a job as doorman at a night club in L.A., and I listened to all the acts from the door. I heard bluegrass, comics, folk singers, string bands. At the same time, I was picking up people's conversations in all-night coffee shops—ambulance drivers, cab-drivers, street sweepers. I did research there as an evening curator, and I started writing—gingerly. I thought at some point I'd like to forge it all into something meaningful, and give it dignity."

Around that time, Waits began performing. Audiences often made it clear that they couldn't stand him. "There were nights when it was like pulling teeth," he said. Now that is changing. Waits said, "The artist business is merchandise. I see it from the bowel now. One night off in two weeks. The problem with performing is it's repetitive, and unless I can come up with something new each night, I find it gruelling. Like I'm just a monkey on a stick. So I try to stretch out nightly, make something of it. And that's very valuable to me, and a lot of songs come out of that. My creative climate is relatively the same as it used to be. Maybe I keep my eyes open a little longer. I still love living in hotels. Transient hotels. I live in a nine-dollar-a-night hotel in L.A., I know every flop in every town. Cheap hotels remind me of home a lot more than some sanitary-protection place. They're a little more humane. They remember your name, too. If you get hungry at 3 A.M., you can go downstairs and the desk clerk will give you half his sandwich. They won't do that at a Hilton."

The Future

A Corporation called Futuristic Foods had a meeting one recent weekday evening in the Renaissance Room of the Holiday Inn on West Fifty-seventh Street to find—in the words of Michael Silver, a salesman for the corporation—"average individuals with above-average desire and attitude who we think have what it takes to become executives in Futuristic Foods." About a hundred and fifty of these individuals showed up, many of them young men dissatisfied with their present jobs, all of them there because different members of the corporation had met them on the street, in fast-food places, or at the laundromat, and had invited them to come. In reality, the purpose of the meeting was to interest the guests in buying franchises in the corporation. Futuristic Foods (the name is unrelated to Futurism, the avant-garde art movement founded in Italy in 1909) is the corporation that runs Futuremart, a computer-coördinated home-delivery supermarket that offers catalogue shopping by telephone—mainly for dry goods and non-perishables such as dog food, Pampers, and beer. Futuristic Foods hopes to become the largest food retailer in the state, and it does not rule out similar success in the nation and, eventually, the world. It believes in making money, and it also believes in building up people. The members of the corporation do this by referring to each other as "the great" (as in "I'd like you to



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meet the great Bob Bobson"); by telling each other that they are beautiful; by shaking hands energetically with a lot of back-and-forth and sidewise movement; and by agreeing loudly with each other with shouts of "Hey!," "All right!," etc., in the manner of Ed McMahon cheering a particularly good joke of Johnny's on the "Tonight Show."

For the meeting in the Renaissance Room, Futuristic Foods provided an ashtray on every third chair and four pitchers of ice water. On the speaker's dais there was a microphone, an American flag, and a blackboard. The first speaker, a strapping young woman named Judy Palen, traced the history of the supermarket from its invention, in Memphis, Tennessee, in 1916, up through the trading-stamp days of the fifties, and concluded with the hypermarkets and shopping malls of today. Then two young men, one after the other, talked about the two kinds of franchises (the Silver Franchise, which costs six thousand dollars and lets the owner keep two per cent of income from customer reorders, and the Gold Franchise, which costs fifteen thousand dollars and lets the owner keep three per cent), and the second young man showed how, by the Malthusian growth that the corporation predicts, the franchise owner can go from ninety cents a week profit to nine dollars to ninety dollars to nine hundred dollars, which comes to well over forty-six thousand dollars a year.

The liveliest, most ebullient speech of the evening—the capper—was given by Sal Cefalu, a man in his late twenties wearing a suit with a brown silk handkerchief in the breast pocket. He said, "I'm an excited type of individual. I'm really jacked up on this idea. Why is chain after chain of supermarkets closing down? Why do they go out of business? Because of pilferage—stealing. When a kid steals a fifteen-cent pack of gum from the A. & P., they have to sell a hundred and fifty dollars' worth of merchandise to pay for it. With our system, we have no stealing. We have tight security at our warehouse. This service will sell. Think of the people who have to have our service—handicapped people, old people, pregnant women. We are going to give our customers credit, and that means more money for you. Forty-six thousand dollars may sound like a lot of money, but that's just because you have been brainwashed into believing that you can't make that much. I used to be like you. Now I'm making more than that every year, with different businesses that I'm in, and I find that I'm now unable to associate with the type of individual I used to associate with before I came to this company. Now one of my best friends is an individual who makes in excess of one hundred thousand dollars a year. You can be as great as you want to be. Many people told Edison that he couldn't invent the light bulb. Did he listen to them? No. Take a lesson from him."

Dr. Sálim Ali

THERE are at least twenty-one hundred species and subspecies of birds on the Indian subcontinent. Nearly all ornithologists in India have been English—an endangered group that, indeed, began to approach extinction in 1947, with the departure of the British. A notable ethnic exception was and is Dr. Sálim Ali, of Bombay, co-author—with S. Dillon Ripley, the ornithologically oriented Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, of Washington, D.C., and Litchfield, Connecticut—of a ten-volume "Handbook of the Birds of India and Pakistan," which was completed in 1974 after twenty-two years of work. Sponsored by the Bombay Natural History Society, of which Dr. Sálim Ali is president, and published by the Oxford University Press, this unique compendium contains a hundred and thirteen multiple-bird color plates and any number of black-and-white distribution maps, and describes, in addition to the avifauna of India and Pakistan, that of Bangladesh, Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, southeast Tibet, and Sri Lanka (formerly Ceylon). Thirty-five hundred pages. Seventeen pounds two ounces. What a handbook!

Dr. Sálim Ali, now eighty years old, a member of a prosperous trading family, came here for a year in the early fifties to start work on the project with Ripley, who was then on the Yale faculty. He returned here in 1962 for an International Ornithological Congress at Cornell, and he recently spent a couple of weeks in Washington, visiting the Ripleys, and proceeded, with his host (the two men, who met in Bombay during the Second World War, when Ripley was stationed in Southeast Asia, have gone on expeditions together for nearly thirty years), to San Francisco for the triennial World Congress of the World Wildlife Fund, whose annual J. Paul Getty Wildlife Conservation Prize—fifty thousand dollars and a certificate—was bestowed on him last February, in absentia, in Washington. We caught him, en route to California, in the tap room of the Yale Club. He is short, trim, erect, white-bearded, well tailored, and vigorous. "Dillon prepared a checklist of Indian birds, which we used as the basis for the 'Handbook,'" he said, over a toasted cheese-and-ham sandwich. "He was responsible for its coverage of taxonomy and general distribution. The ecological and life-history parts are mostly mine—field habits, food, voice, nesting, and so on." Preparing these involved personal observation and recourse to published material in a vast number of journals and books. The standard work on Indian ornithology for many years was T. C. Jerdon's 1862-64 "The Birds of India," based largely on the study of eggs and skins, but in the present century this branch of zoology has been revolutionized by bird-watching and field study with the aid of cameras, binoculars, telephoto lenses, color photography, and sound recording. "I'm especially interested in the *living* bird," Dr. Sálim Ali said. "A couple of our birds are very much endangered, and possibly extinct—Jerdon's Courser and Blewitt's Owl, which I have never actually seen."

Mr. Ripley then joined us, and said, "The cutting down of forests because of population pressure is causing habitats to disappear." He ordered eggs Benedict without the eggs, and continued, "I'm depressed by India's forestry policies. Even when forests aren't destroyed, thick forests are often thinned out and converted into sal or teak or eucalyptus forests, for timber.

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"We'd love to, Fran, but I'm afraid we'll have to take a rain check. With us, Christmas is traditionally a family day."

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Only a few species of trees are left. From an airplane, the forest seems the same, but certain insects are eliminated. How can an Indian insect get along on eucalyptus, which is generally introduced from Australia? So you begin to get a monoculture that affects the birds and large mammals adversely through the food chain. Insect-eating fish disappear, then reptiles, including lizards—and then the birds drop out. In recent years, I noticed in sal forests a very limited kind of bird fauna. Some of the birds Sálim and I had seen before had disappeared. Environmental degradation was quite noticeable on our last couple of trips."

The Secretary offered Dr. Sálim Ali a dessert, but he shook his head. "The helpings in this country are enormous," he said. "Coming from a place where everything is scarce, I'm struck by the waste here. And everything is so expensive! There should be half portions, at half prices."

Mr. Ripley had thoughtfully brought along Volumes I and X of the "Handbook," subtitled, respectively, "Divers to Hawks" and "Flowerpeckers to Buntings," and he let us borrow them. Here, under "Little Grebe or Dabchick. *Podiceps ruficollis capensis* Salvadori," is an example of Dr. Sálim Ali's ornibiographical style:

GENERAL HABITS. . . . An excellent diver and underwater swimmer. Disappears smoothly below the surface without leaving a ripple, or takes a little upward leap to plunge vertically with astonishing suddenness. After being fired at once, will often vanish before the charge of shot can reach it a second time!

VOICE and CALLS. In addition to the runs of shrill, rather musical trilling, a sharp monosyllabic *click* is uttered repeatedly when agitated, as on approach of nest by intruder; and also sharp squeaks like an unoiled bicycle wheel.

And, under "Crested Bunting. *Melophus lathami* (Gray)," a nice instance of togetherness:

COURTSHIP (one observation, SA). Male singing from euphorbia-top, chased female with fluttering lark-like flight, tail partially cocked and crest erect. On ground he drooped his wings, spread his tail and fluffed out the rump-feathers. He raised and opened sailwise the wing on the side of the hen while walking in a semicircle round her about a metre away. Female responded in same way by raising her wing on his side. Thus, they drew closer. Male hopped on to her back and treaded her, his wings fluttering throughout the act. Thereafter each picked up a blade of grass and flew off towards nest.

Survey

EIGHT per cent unemployment notwithstanding, unwitting schoolchildren continue to be assaulted with the question "What do you want to be when you grow up?" One day recently, Dr. Harvey Kaplan, a child psychologist, came to the Stuyvesant Private School, on East Nineteenth Street, and put the question to three groups of pupils, between six and thirteen years old—about sixty children in all. For several months now, Dr. Kaplan has conducted interviews on behalf of a toy

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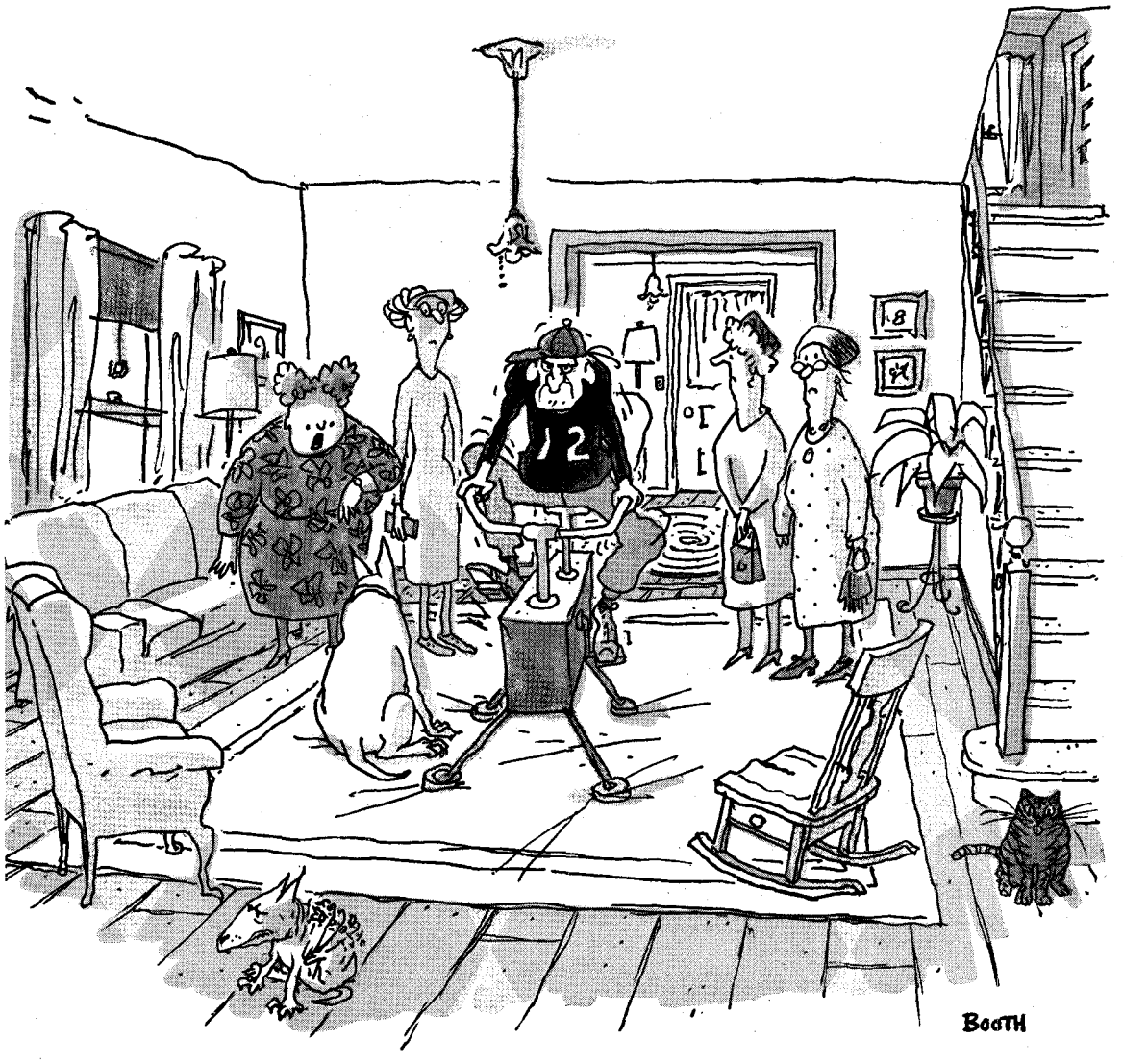

"Mr. Swinehart has just crossed Route 36 at Goshen Junction. We are all expected, in exactly eighteen minutes, to greet him as he comes down the driveway."

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company that wants to know what children want to be, because the toy company, which manufactures a line of Wannabee toys, itself wants to be profitable. In other words, if a significantly large number of little people tell Dr. Kaplan that they want to become dirt farmers or free-agent baseball players, the toy company will presumably begin to manufacture dolls equipped with lifelike callused hands or high-priced attorneys.

When Dr. Kaplan confronts children with the existential dilemma, he doesn't merely ask them what they want to be, and leave it at that. His list of questions—there are seven of them—also includes provocative items like "Who is your favorite famous person?" and "Which job is the most dangerous?" After listening to three hours of interviews, we didn't detect any conclusive trends. Occasionally, technical problems interfered. For instance, the concept "famous" confused most of the first and second graders. Jimmy Carter's name was mentioned a couple of times when this question came up, but a majority of the children in the classroom announced that Mrs. Fligman and Mr. Burpee were their favorite famous people. Mrs. Elaine Fligman teaches first grade at the Stuyvesant Private School and Mr. Robert Burpee is the headmaster, and, although we like the idea of a line of Mr. Burpee and Mrs. Fligman toys and games, we doubt whether the toy industry will make a leap in that particular direction very soon. "Well, Mr. Burpee might be famous," Dr. Kaplan said to the pupils, "but try to think of someone in the outside world. Do you know the difference between this room and the outside world?" Not really.

A lot of the younger children said they thought that construction workers, firemen, and crooks had dangerous jobs, but they weren't always clear on what made those jobs dangerous. One girl said, "Construction work is dangerous because those people when they work go down in the ground and the mountain climbers come down on top of them and scratch them with rattlesnakes."

We noticed—and we hope that Dr. Kaplan was paying attention—that the younger a child was, the more prosaic his or her occupational aspirations were likely to be. The first and second graders tended to want to be doctors, nurses, or teachers, with a correction officer or a football player thrown in here and there. The responses became increasingly sophisticated until, among the oldest students, Dr. Kaplan began to elicit answers like astronaut, spy, race-car designer, fashion model, inventor of scientific instruments, movie star, veterinarian (several), and—certainly the most carefully deliberated—"advertising seller in media networks." The interviews were planned so that at the end of the session the children had a chance to rethink their original choices and write down whether they had changed their minds. The oldest group made several changes: the would-be inventor of scientific instruments had decided to become an astronaut; one prospective veterinarian had switched to skydiving or acting; the advertising seller in media networks realized that she would rather be President; and another potential veterinarian, indecisive, thought that she might like to become a writer, too. On blank sheets of paper the children drew pictures of themselves at work at their imagined jobs. The veterinarian/writer drew two pictures. As a vet, she was productively occupied helping an animal friend in need. As a writer, she sat alone in a book-filled room, a typewriter on the desk, her hands at her sides, a large orange question mark swimming in the air above her head.

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UNDER THE SHRINKING ROYALTY THE VILLAGE SMITHY STANDS

THE oval anteroom of Diamond & Oyster, my publishers, had been refurbished since my last visit with a large bas-relief plaque of their logo, a diamond-studded oyster bearing the motto "*Noli unquam oblivisci, Carole: pecuniam sapientiam esse*" ("Never Forget, Charlie: Money Is Wisdom"), and under it a blond, oval-shaped receptionist strikingly reminiscent of Shelley Winters. As thirty-five minutes ticked away without any word from Mitchell Krakauer, the editor I was calling on, I began to develop paranoid symptoms. Heretofore there hadn't been any hassle about seeing him; what was amiss now? Had some stripling in patched denim fresh out of Antioch whispered into his ear that I was *vieux jeu*, old hat, *nye kulturny*? Or had Krakauer learned in some devious way that Shelley Winters was in a 1941 play of mine, "The Night Before Christmas," and deliberately planted her double here to taunt me as a slippered pantaloon? I felt myself inflate like a blowfish at the veiled insult. Surely nobody could be so base, and yet in this carnivorous age of four-hundred-thousand-dollar sales and instant remainders worship of the bitch goddess Success overrode a decent respect for the aged. I got to my feet, cheeks flaming.

"Try Mr. Krakauer's line again, Miss. I can't understand why they don't answer."

The receptionist's eyes rolled upward in martyrdom. "Look, sir, do I have to keep on telling you? If you'd only state your business—"

"My dear young woman," I said, gripping the edge of her desk to steady myself. "Since you were in amniotic fluid when I first signed with this house, let me enlighten you. Diamond & Oyster have published eleven books of mine. If I have to undergo a Rorschach to discuss a twelfth, maybe it's time I peddled my papers elsewhere."

"Oh, you're one of our *authors!*" she squealed. "Why didn't you mention that before? Who did you say you were?"

"Well, my real name is Travis Nuthatch, but I write under the name of Israel Zangwill."

"O.K., Mr. Zangwill. You have a seat there, and I'll see what I can do."

She busied herself with her apparatus, and I sat down, mollified and refreshed by our interchange. More time passed. Messengers innumerable arrived laden with proofs, drawings, and office lunches. Three or four lovelies from Vassar and Bennington, job applicants hugging postgraduate degrees in Middle English and Georgian poetry to their enchanting bosoms, passed through to be interviewed and dated by lickerish subordinates. A whole decrepitude of writers—Sudanese, Lapps, Bosnians, Trobrianders—appeared and were hustled in on their own recognizance, and still I sat there, a pariah excluded from the temple of letters he had helped erect. Then a sobering thought struck me. In all justice to Krakauer, he had no appointment with me; I'd come by on an impulse, without phoning, and perhaps he was in a meeting, or, more likely, on the bridle path. Krakauer's passion for horsemanship was a byword—he was besotted with the sport. His office was filled with stirrups, snaffles, and trophies attesting to his equestrian skill; he wore riding breeches to work, swished a crop against them as he conferred. Still, wherever he was at the moment, I thought sullenly, it ill behooved his secretary to keep a celebrity like Israel Zangwill, dead *or* alive, cooling his heels in the anteroom.

"Hello there!" a familiar British voice exclaimed. "What in the world are you doing here?" The owner of the voice was a florid, dapper gentleman with a Guard's mustache, clad in a short warm. "Remember me? Arthur Maybrick, of Edouard & Russell, your haberdashers in Clifford Street?"

"To be sure," I said, rising. "How are you? I heard you retired when the firm closed down."

"Couldn't stand the inactivity. I'm with Tautz nowadays—you recall, the sporting tailors who used to be in Grafton Street. Matter of fact, that's why I'm here. Just had a word with Mitchell Krakauer. Do you know him?"

Curious to ascertain what publishers buy one half so precious as the thing they sell, I clamored for details. In a recent sale at Parke Bernet, it emerged, Krakauer, after fierce bidding, had acquired a pair of breeches made by Tautz for John Huston when he was M.F.H. of the Galway Blazers in Ireland. As Krakauer was two feet shorter than Huston, substantial alterations were necessary crotchwise, and Maybrick had been flown overseas to superintend them. "What with my fare and hotel expenses, it'll come to a neat eight hundred quid before we're done," he told me, "but I must say I haven't heard a peep out of the man."

"Neither have I. I've been waiting here over an hour."

"I say," remarked Maybrick, voice lowered. "Rather weird setup he has in there for a publisher's office, don't you think?"

"How do you mean—the horse brasses and so forth?"

"No, no, the other stuff," he said mysteriously. "Ah, well, I daresay you'll see for yourself."

"Ready for you, Mr. Zangwill," the receptionist fluted. "You can go in now."

With a handshake and an injunction to knock him up on my next visit to London, Maybrick left and I went down the hall. Calpurnia, Krakauer's secretary, rose from her typewriter as I entered. She was wearing not only a bowler and a stock but a riding apron that seemed excessive for the amount of mud kicked up on the twenty-eighth floor of a skyscraper.

"Oh, it's you," she said, and added, puzzled, "Where's Mr. Zangwill?"

I shrugged. "*Quién sabe*? That's one of those metaphysical

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questions." I nodded toward the interior. "Is Mitchell free now?"

"He will be in a jiffy. He's just finishing something."

I subsided, and, reaching for a copy of *The Field*, buried myself in its pages. Halfway through an article on the paucity of oasthouses in East Anglia, I stiffened. A deep repeated wheezing, like giant inhalations of breath, was proceeding from Krakauer's sanctum, followed by the clang of metal being struck. Alarmed, I turned toward Calpurnia, but she was typing away, visibly undisturbed. Moments later, her phone buzzed and she motioned me inward.

So startling was the transformation I beheld that my mouth fell open. The burled-walnut desk, the luxurious easy chairs and sporting prints, the equestrian memorabilia—all had vanished, and in their place was a scene straight out of Longfellow: a miniature nineteenth-century blacksmith shop. Garbed in a leather apron, Krakauer was bent over an anvil, his hammer busily tapping a horseshoe. Spread all about were the traditional accoutrements of the smith—the forge heaped with glowing coals, the bellows, pincers, a workbench strewn with tools, and bundles of iron bars.

"Come in, man, come in!" Krakauer hailed me cheerily, laying aside his hammer. He wiped the honest sweat from his brow with a bandanna, extracted a square of cut plug. "Have a chaw?"

I shook my head, still overcome. "*Jiminy, what's happened? Nobody* told me—I mean, where am I?"

"I know," he said. "Everyone was stunned when I made the change, but I guess you've been away, eh? Well, sit down somewhere—do you mind this soapbox?—and I'll put you in the picture."

"Are you ready for this, Ellie? I'm making three resolutions for the New Year. I'm going to straighten my tie, comb my hair, and pull up my socks."

"Before you do, though," I asked, "what business are you in?"

"Oh, I still publish, but in a different way. I take it you know who Gaston Gallimard was?"

"Sure, the famous French publisher. Didn't he die last year?"

"Right. He brought out Proust, Gide, Sartre, Malraux—you name it. Well, just prior to his death, at ninety-four, here's what he said." He handed me a newspaper clipping encased in plastic. "This was his obit in the London *Times*. Read the last paragraph."

" 'If I could have my life over again,' " it ran, " 'I would choose as a first occupation something having nothing to do with publishing, say a pharmacist's or plumber's business. There the income would allow me to publish on the side only all that pleased me without having to think in the slightest about the commercial side.' "

"And you've actually realized his dream," I marvelled.

"I've tried. Of course, pharmacy and plumbing take years of study, but spending half my life in the saddle as I do, all this"—he gestured about—"is practically second nature to me. And you'd be surprised the income I make from horseshoes. Not to be sneezed at."

"But how many good noncommercial books have you discovered?"

"None so far," he admitted, folding his arms. "But just look at my biceps. You won't find brawny arms like these over at Knopf or Viking. Anyway, enough about me. Do I sense you have a new book in the oven?"

"Mitchell," I said. "I don't want to crow, but this is going to be the biggest thing since 'Les Misérables'—it'll yield three printings before publication. The central character is another Jean Valjean. I can see Jack Nicholson in the part—"

"For Chrissake, I told you I'm through with best-sellers. I want something doomed, with an aura of failure."

"It's got that, too," I said urgently. "It's got lust, brutality, compassion, foreign intrigue, suspense—the entire gamut of human emotion. The notion came to me in London last summer."

He retrieved his hammer. "Mind if I go on working while you tell it?"

"No, just so long as you stay in the room. O.K., here's how I latched on to the idea. Back in July, I'm stopping at Brown's Hotel, in Mayfair, and in their house organ, a sheet called *Chandelier*, I read that Colonel Sanders, the founder of Kentucky Fried Chicken, has also based himself there. During his last stay, he opened the hun-

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"We don't mind your smiling when you arrive in the morning, Hilgers, but I've noticed that you smile throughout the day."

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dredth Kentucky Fried Chicken store in the U.K., held major press conferences, visited Windsor Castle, lunched at the House of Lords, and picnicked at Woburn Abbey. This cat is a real celebrity in Britain, like—well, like Israel Zangwill."

Krakauer blinked. "Odd you should mention him. I just got word he was coming in to see me."

"Fantastic. But what happened then was even stranger. As I step into the hotel lift an hour later, who's riding down but Colonel Sanders himself—white goatee, string tie, the whole shtick—and another guy, a business associate like. And this bird is strenuously urging the Colonel to buy up a bunch of shares in Frank Perdue's chicken empire—and force him out of the field. But it's no dice. The old boy keeps shaking his head, and finally comes out with a slang phrase—a British expression they never heard south of the Mason-Dixon line. 'No, suh,' he says. 'That's all my eye and Betty Martin.' Do you see it, Mitchell? Do you get it?"

"Get what?" He stopped hammering. "He meant it was a lot of blue sky, of bushwa."

"Holy Moses, do I have to spell it out for you? The old guy was a *Limey*—a fake! In a flash, it all dawned on me. Ten to one the real Colonel Sanders was trussed up like a fowl upstairs while these two highbinders were scurrying off to manipulate his stock in a power play netting millions! *Voom*—right away, before we hit the ground floor, I've got my whole novel blocked out. The main story line, the two Colonel Sanderses, is a piece of cake; I can lift the plot of E. Phillips Oppenheim's 'The Great Impersonation,' weaving in actual real-life characters, like Robert Vesco and Meyer Lansky, the way Doctorow and Capote do. Narrating the action is yours truly, a brilliant young crusading journalist—a combination of Inspector Javert and Leslie Howard—who brings the malefactors to book and wins the Colonel's pulchritudinous niece, Cicely Mainwaring."

"Is any of this on paper yet?"

"Are you out of your living mind?" I snorted. "I should leave a gilt-edged yarn lying around where some goniff from the Authors League can filch it?"

"Yes, that's wise. But there's a better reason not to write it down. It's too commercial, kid, too *much* of a cinch. Yes, it'll make a bloody fortune, but if that's what you want, you're barking up the wrong tree. A new wind is blowing through Diamond & Oyster, my friend."

"That's not what it says on your logo."

"That thing? I'll let you in on a secret. Max Oyster's nephew is a sign painter—he made it for a seafood restaurant in Queens, but they went bust." He wiped his hands on a bit of cotton waste and draped a paternal arm over my shoulder. "Now, pay close attention. Your next book should deal with your profound mystical revelation in India."

"Did I have one?"

"You must have, in some cockamamie ashram or other you saw—everybody does. Unburden yourself. Write a series of poetic epiphanies about death and copulation with wide margins like Kahlil Gibran—something I can sink my teeth into. I could get stuck with ten thousand copies of a work like that if it were done right."

"But you can't guarantee a book will bomb. Barbara Walters is apt to read a passage by mistake and overnight a million listeners will be yelling for a copy."

"Hmm, you're right. We can't afford to run a risk like that. Look, maybe it shouldn't be on the adult level at all. What about a tender love story between a little girl and a pony, told from the pony's point of view? You know, like 'Watership Down' or 'Salar the Salmon'?"

"Wait, Mitchell, wait!" I cried out, inspired. "I had a notion a while back—how did it go? I had a title and everything. Now I remember! 'Smokey and the Millionaire: The Saga of a Whitefish.' "

"Smokey the whitefish." He rolled it over on his tongue. "I *like* it. It smells right, you know what I mean? I can see a whole warehouseful of copies ready to be pulped. Where does it take place?"

"At Barney Greengrass the Sturgeon King, on Amsterdam Avenue. It begins the night before Christmas, and all through the house not a herring is stirring, not even a bloater or a side of Novy. The store is empty of stock except for one lone whitefish, Smokey, shivering in this cold showcase. He's plunged into misery—everyone's home decking the halls with challah, trimming the tree with kosher macaroons, and what does the Yuletide hold for poor Smokey? Refrigeration in a dark

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store, with a hungry cat leering at him."

"Masterly!" exulted Krakauer. "You know who we'll get to do the jacket? Salvador Dali! Each little bone in Smokey cunningly delineated—"

"What is this—a production meeting?" I interrupted. "I'm trying to tell you a *story*. Well, so, carried along by Smokey's stream of consciousness, we retrace his past—his birth in Lake Superior, spawning with girlfriends, a narrow escape from being devoured by a pike, bilge like that. Then, all of a sudden, a long-forgotten incident comes back to him. A wealthy Grosse Pointe sportsman, while angling there, accidentally hooked into a barrel of cement and was in danger of being pulled overboard."

"What was a barrel of cement doing in the lake?"

"Search me," I said impatiently. "Somebody was standing in it—some hoodlum from the Dion O'Banion mob. Anyway, Smokey realized the sportsman's peril, swam to his rescue, and snapped the line with his teeth. Naturally, the sportsman caught only a glimpse of him, but, eternally grateful, vowed that if it was ever in his power he'd repay his debt to the little fellow.

"Now, then," I continued fluently. "We dissolve to the forty-second floor of the Waldorf Towers, where tuxedo-clad Daniel Mariana Trench, powerful Midwest utilities tycoon and world-famed sportsman, sits alone and desolate on Christmas Eve. All his millions, his forty Rembrandts, the superb specimens of fringe-ear oryx, greater kudu, and Mrs. Gray's lechwe that have fallen to his gun frowning down from the walls are as ashes in his mouth, for he is friendless. The four women he's espoused, the children they've borne him care merely for his money; nowhere is there a soul to whom he can turn for companionship. Finally, with a heavy heart, he summons his motor; *faute de mieux*, he will celebrate the Nativity with a midnight snack. As the superbly appointed Daimler glides through Central Park toward Barney Greengrass's—"

"Stop!" commanded Krakauer. "I'm way ahead of you. I can already hear Trench's hoarse cry of recognition: 'Smokey! Is it really you?' I also know where you stole the plot, but in Shaw's version Androcles never ate the lion."

"Neither does Trench eat Smokey," I said firmly. "We squeeze on the two at the Waldorf Towers before a blazing hearth—maybe with Smokey in a little brown tuxedo—clinking glasses in a toast as the bells usher in the Yule."

For a full five seconds, Krakauer stood immersed in thought. "Nope," he said at last. "It's another Pollyanna story and it'll sell like hotcakes, but I regret we're forced to turn it down—it's too joyous, too upbeat. You created a marvellous mood of despair with Smokey brooding in the showcase—almost like Louis-Ferdinand Céline. I was hoping the cat would get his tongue as well as the rest of him. But you blew it with the bubba-meiseh about Daniel Mariana Trench. It's not for Diamond & Oyster, kid. I'm sorry."

I left him standing by his anvil, an idealist from whose deeply furrowed face the last remnants of a dream had drained away. Then, turning up the collar of my trenchcoat, I trudged out into the rain and went across town to Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

—S. J. Perelman

"Four stars from Craig Claiborne, raves from Mimi Sheraton, and a clean bill from the Department of Health."

•

When a child enters school we don't bring the child "up to the level" of the mathematician and start him or her out in a course of introduction to differential calculus. No, we start with one apple plus two apples equal four apples.—*St. Louis Review, newspaper of the Archdiocese of St. Louis.*

From there it's just an easy jump to solid geometry.

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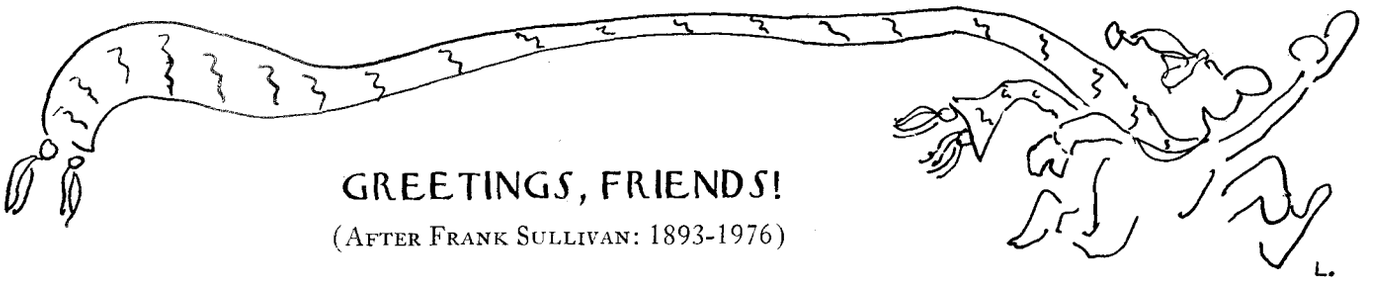

GREETINGS, FRIENDS!

(After Frank Sullivan: 1893-1976)

Dear friends, the founder of this rhyme
Has left us for a rarer clime,
Leaving this season all unbarded
And countless friends un-Christmas-carded.
Some forty Yules were Sullivanned
In lines that lightly rhymed and scanned;
Such gifts are frankly not bequeathed,
Yet still we wish our Christmas wreathed,
And so propose December cheer,
As taught by our old chanticleer.
Wassail, all! May we begin
With hugs for Ursula K. Le Guin,
And then clink a cheerful glass
With Mo Udall and William Gass,
And next request a year of grace
For Melba Moore and Stuart Chase,
Susan Sontag, William Haddad,
And Syria's Pres., Hafez al-Assad?
Now let us all invoke, for starters,
Benisons on the Jimmy Carters;
May the new year lay good Karma
On our White House-tenant farmer.
Rosalynn and rare Miss Lillian,
Join our famous Yule cotillion!
Dance, Ms. Amy? In formal splendor
We'll rumba to "The Peanut Vendor,"
Then sweep the hall, to graceful chords,
In waltzes for the Jerry Fords.
I wish it known that what I keep
Are loving thoughts for Meryl Streep,
And to confess I gladly harbor
Friendly feelings for Richard Barber,
Richard Avedon, Richmond Flowers,
And Lis and John and young Nick Bowers.
Carve the goose and pass the gravy
For Carol Troy and Greg Mullavey;
Fill platters for each Bob De Niro
(*Père* the painter and *fils* flick-hero);
And light the pudding for Way Bandy,
Jean Marsh, and the Amazing Randi.
Please could we have a loud hosanna
For Dr. Har Gobind Khorana,
And hear some joyful gloriats
In praise of Nobel laureates,
Making the lofty welkin ring
For Dr. Samuel C. C. Ting?
Let's shout the name, in madder music,
Of Dr. D. Carleton Gajdusek!
And then croak hoarsely for their fellow—
Our Nobel letter-man, Saul Bellow.
This is the season in which to hail
Yitzhak Rabin and Clamma Dale,
And to reveal our secret pash
For Alice Trillin and Arthur Ashe,
Lorenzo Music, Twyla Tharp,
Niki Lauda, and Irwin Karp.
Suzanne Farrell, here's looking at *you!*
Ahoy, Danmark and Nippon Maru!
Health to runners in undies and Keds!
Cheers for the two-time-champion Reds!
Pip-pip for the Tories' Maggie Thatcher,
And Thurman Munson, the sterling catcher!
Peace to Abe Beame and all harried mayors
And The Not Ready for Prime Time Players.
Claes Oldenburg, will you play Santa
While we pop down-cellar to decant a
Jeroboam of Veuve Clicquot
For Valerie Harper and Sharon Moe,
And seek a Madeira to impress
Lewis Thomas and Thomas B. Hess,
And broach a flask of dynamite ouzo
For Doris Kearns and Mario Puzo?
Arnold Schwarzenegger, how are you?
Shake hands, Arn, with Frank Perdue.
Giddap, Kringle! Twitch those reins
To hasten gifts to Paul Sarbanes;
Stuff two stockings full with presents
For Judith Guest and Donald Pleasence;
Stuff *deux chaussettes* with rare *cadeaux*
For Jean Renoir and Jeanne Moreau;
And, Kris, kindly do as well
By Molly Ivins and Pat Caddell.
Bring electric trains and trackery
For our longtime pal Frank Zachary,
And a puppy each for Stacy Keach
And marvellous Nadia Comaneci!
Sarah Caldwell (divinest Sarah!),
Please ask Matteo Manuguerra
To join some troupe of Yuletide singers
And carol for the Bronson Bingers,
Robert Wilson, Marion Knox,
And the recently wedded Benjamin Spocks.
Come, Willie Morris! Come, Maury Wills!
Make with the tonsils for Beverly Sills,
Diana Vreeland, Colonel Sanders,
And Jean-Pierre Coopman, the Lion of Flanders.
Ravi Shankar, play us a raga
To inflame Sen. Spark Matsunaga.
Tune up, Ry Cooder! Sing, Scat Man Crothers!
Here's Phoebe Snow—Phoeb, please join the others
To warble in praise of Adrienne Rich,
Seiji Ozawa and Bobby Grich,
Dorothy Hamill, Frank Langella,
Samuel Beckett, Jean-Charles Tacchella,
Helmut Schmidt, Kenneth Tynan,
And the Rev. Rep. (D., Mass.) Robert Drinan!

Farewell, upstate harp of Tara!
Vale, Frank, sweet bird of Saratoga! Forgive these borrowed rhymes
And cracked tunes played on your old chimes.
Our end's to send, with your good grace,
A Christmas message in this space:
Peace on each land beneath the sun.
Good friends, God bless us, every one!

—Roger Angell

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THE INQUIRING DEMOGRAPHER

THIS WEEK'S QUESTION: WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO GET MARRIED?

(ASKED IN CONNECTION WITH NATIONAL ALIMONY AND CHILD-SUPPORT WEEK)

NICK BOWERS, COMPUTER SALES REP, MANHATTAN (SHOWN WITHOUT WIFE, BOBBI SUE): Bobbi Sue and I got acquainted at a kind of swinging bar on First Avenue called Nooners. I think we met once before at Jack's Rabbit, on Second Avenue, although that may have been her roommate. Or my roommate. Anyway, none of the gang we know are into marriage, so we thought it might be kind of kinky. I think she hangs out now at Elmo Gantry's, on Eighty-second Street, unless that place has changed its name back to Monday Afternoon.

PENELOPE SHAUGHNESSY-UNDERTHALER, RESEARCHER, CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS (SHOWN WITH HUSBAND, NATHANIAL SHAUGHNESSY-UNDERTHALER): At first, I was not going to get married, because I refused to give up my name. My best friend, Jennifer Morganwasser, felt the same way. But then we realized we could just hyphenate, so I married Nat and Jenny married Jeremiah Christianson. Then we realized that if she had a little boy and I had a little girl they might marry someday and be called Jedidiah and Abigail Shaughnessy-Underthaler-Morganwasser-Christianson. And what about *their* children? I've decided to leave Nat and become a worker-priest.

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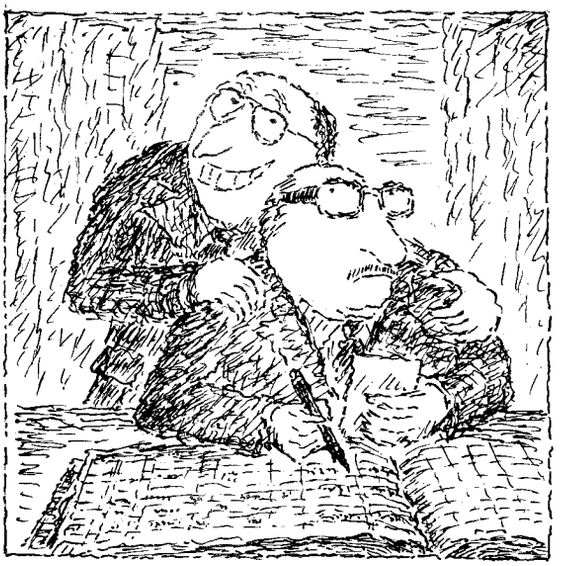

Barnett J. Devine, Business Executive, Beverly Hills, California (shown with accountant, Maury Zipkin): Well, when I heard that the I.R.S. was sniffing around the Wingate Ribbon & Forge merger tax-shelter writeoff deal, I right away decided to marry my accountant, Maury Zipkin, so he couldn't be forced to testify against me. It's what they call a marriage of convenience. Maury may turn me down, of course; there's a rumor he's already engaged to my partner.

Sam Crow, Rancher, Foothill, Montana (shown with horse, Old Smoke): A man gets lonely out here on the range, with no one to keep him company except his old horse, Old Smoke. I wanted to get one of those mail-order-catalogue brides, like my Great-Uncle Zeke did, but the only catalogue I could find didn't seem to have anything in it but beansprouts and biodegradable T-shirts and lute kits. When I read about a barn raising over in the next county, I drove my pickup over, hoping to meet someone during the covered-dish lunch, but it turned out what they meant was that one of those gurus was trying to raise a barn up off the ground by chanting and carrying on. This used to be mostly cattle country.

Harry Rondale, Druggist, Mineola, Long Island (shown with group): Well, about the time Esther and I felt our marriage was getting kind of stale, I read about something called group marriage in one of the magazines down at the store, so we decided to try it—although I didn't realize it'd be such a big group. We couldn't really ask the Greenbergs without asking the Johnsons, because we play in the same bridge game, and then we thought we had to have Hilda Baskin, because she makes the greatest chocolate cake in Nassau County, and how much fun it would be to have old Barney Quinn around to cheer things up with his Jolson imitation, and . . . well, one thing led to another. To me, it seems more like mob marriage, but I guess I'm old-fashioned.

—Calvin Trillin
and Edward Koren

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THE PAPIER-MÂCHÉ SANTA CLAUS

THE tall cedar, with its sweet smell and long strings of tinsel, was as exciting as a first Christmas tree could have been expected to be. There was a bell quietly ringing from the tip of the tree that curved down from the ceiling, and Ada's mother had set a papier-mâché Santa Claus on the floor under the tree. A chunk of chestnut wood crackled in the big stove and sunshine filled the east window and the bird that often sang in her heart was singing when her grandfather said, "Ada, there is no Santa Claus."

He looked so solemn that she knew he was trying to be kind. Old people try to protect us from evil, she thought, and must be forgiven for saying so much that we do not need to hear. Certainly it had been unnecessary for her grandfather to say "there is no Santa Claus." Even if she had not always known it, there would have been no need for him to tell her. When a bird sings in your heart and your father has cut a cedar tree for the house, a papier-mâché Santa Claus will do.

Sitting on the striped carpet beside the Santa Claus, Ada took a long look at him. His coat was sky blue and sparkled with artificial snow. His face was pale and peaked, like her mother's, not red and fat like her father's or the pictured faces of Santa Claus. Nor was this the face of a kind of man who sometimes picked her up without warning and laughed when he said, "I only wanted to know if I could *lift* you." This was a sober, thoughtful man—and handsome.

Now her grandfather, who long ago must have been both sober and handsome—if not thoughtful—sat in his big rocking chair beside the stove, eating apple scrapings with a spoon. With her back to the stove, she took a deep breath of the apple's fragrance and forgave him for having said "there is no Santa Claus." She understood that it was his way of asking her not to cry when she saw that Christmas trees in other houses had heaps of gifts under them.

WHEN her son, Christopher, was five years old, Ada set the papier-mâché Santa Claus under an Austrian pine for which she had paid the tree grower two dollars. The carpet was a soft gray broadloom, and Christopher was sitting beside the track on which a sky-blue Lionel train ran beneath the tree. Ada and Marty, Christopher's father, had just been arguing about whether or not she should have spent two dollars for the tree. What Christopher thought while the train travelled a monk's-cloth landscape uninhabited except for the Santa Claus he did not say. When his father, looking very red in the face, said, "Ada, it is time you learned that there is no Santa Claus," it seemed as though Christopher had not heard him.

Since Christopher smiled as he sent the blue train whistling on its circuitous course beneath the Austrian pine, Ada assumed that the bird she had heard singing in her heart beside a cedar tree thirty years earlier now sang in his heart, and an hour later, when a boy with whom Christopher occasionally played paid them a Christmas call and asked, "Is that all you got?," she thought the question shockingly rude. What Christopher thought she could not guess, because the little blue train jumped its track just then, and Christopher, still smiling, replaced it without a word.

AFTER breakfast, when Marty had gone to work, Christopher backed his car across the frozen lawn and Ada smiled at her daughter-in-law, Joan, and said, "This is Epiphany." Both her smile and the words were keepsakes her father often had used to remind her of time's passage, and Ada was happy to recall them now.

Joan held a string of yellow beads she had just found on the carpet in the shadow of the piano bench and her face was flushed, the way it was when she collected the children's belongings prior to their departure. Once, a doll forgotten, Christopher had backed away from the turnpike entrance and returned. That was when Molly had been an only child. Now that there were three children, Joan's experience in shepherding toys and clothing into the little blue car had made her so expert that an oversight rarely occurred. Nor did Ada, in reality, hope for one.

It was a day for moving away from the past. The sky was a lovely shade of green, and cloudless.

As though to the magic of a green and cloudless sky one of her father's sayings must be added to assure them of the day's pleasant portent, Ada went outdoors and repeated the announcement she had made to Joan. "This, Christopher, is Epiphany."

"Really, Mother?" Christopher's eyes widened in a sober stare to let her know that he remembered his grandfather's habit of calling their attention to the passage of time. "Do you think Epiphany is a good day for us to be leaving?"

"The weather will be good all the way."

"Aren't you sorry that Christmas is over and we have to leave?"

"Christmas isn't *over*. This is Epiphany."

"Yes, I know. You've told me."

At this, they laughed—suddenly and savagely—the way Molly and Bruce, down the stairs before breakfast, had laughed when they saw a wood fire dancing in the fireplace. Then, with the sound of their laughter, the air had turned to water and those things that tend to be airborne—echoes of long-dead voices, and lint; even objects as substantial as the piano and her own stout body—*floated*. The miracle had lasted but a moment and Ada supposed it was one of the sensations a woman invariably experiences when her grandchildren are laughing. Now, however, while she watched Christopher fit a puzzle of cartons and suitcases into the car's trunk, she again felt the odd buoyancy and said, "How nice it must be to put everything where it really fits."

"I don't know when we'll come again. It's a long trip."

His words rustled in the cold air and sounded like those strips of glazed paper she sometimes used to pack a fragile gift.

"I know it," she said. "You've come a long way."

"Oh, do you think so?"

"Everyone does. We are very proud of you."

"But you mustn't be. Pride isn't Christian, you know."

Had he intended this gentle reproof to be taken seriously, Ada thought, he would not have raised his eyebrows and smiled as if her play on words had been a piece of warm apple pie.

"If true, that's the tragic flaw of Christianity," she said.

Without answering, Christopher looked away to the east; in profile, he

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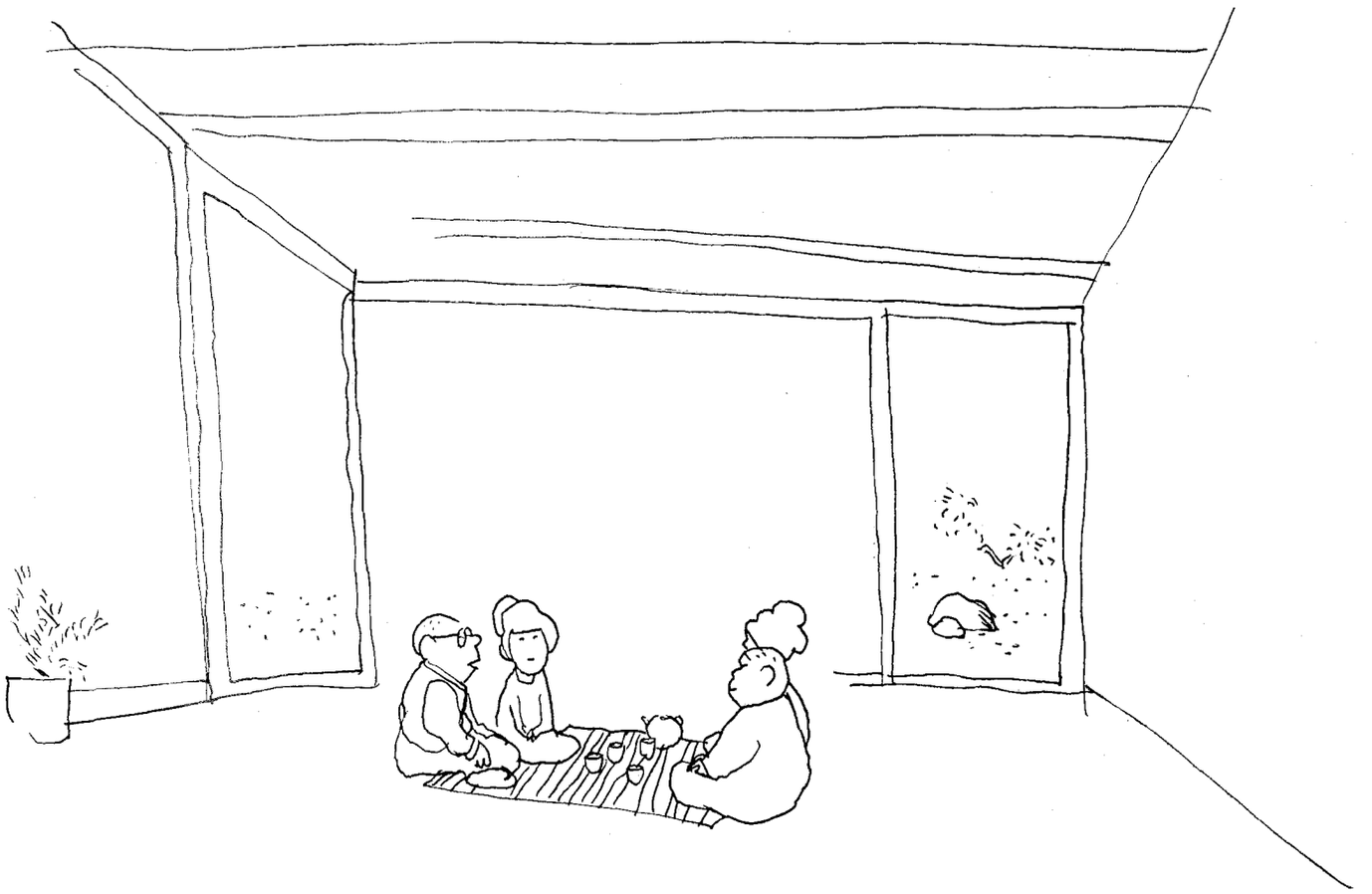

"We dig no-nonsense décor."

• •

reminded her of the boy who, in another time of their lives, when both were believed to be too young to wear the *toga virilis* in her father's house, had said, "Mother, you can't help me anymore. I'm grateful for the help you've given me. But you can't *help* me anymore. You must stop trying."

Into the stillness that followed Christopher's words then she had breathed the little white lie that had been one of her conversational habits. "I know. I know."

But how could she have known that so harsh a prohibition was, in reality, a simple statement of the truth? In the years that followed, it had been true, and in the years to come it almost certainly would be. The time of Christopher's next visit, however, was uncertain and must remain so. She could accept its uncertainty as easily as, at the age of six, she had accepted the solitary presence of the papier-mâché Santa Claus under her Christmas tree. The sadness that she felt now was for the truth she knew and still regretted.

When Joan had thanked her for a lovely visit and the doors of the car were buttoned tight, Ada went into the house and stood beside one of the windows that overlooked the road to the turnpike. Ordinarily, the Christmas season brought snow. But since the ground was bare, a spindrift of dust followed the little blue car down the road and across a short stretch of level ground that Ada's mother had called "the flat" to the edge of Jackson's hill. Here the car abruptly dropped from sight and the dust drifted in a small sienna cloud above a field of winter wheat.

Then, facing the room and a small blue spruce that she had cut from one of her own plantings of nursery stock, Ada sat in her favorite chair. Among the tree's sparse decorations she had set a titmouse nest with a clutch of tinsel beads. Assorted animals from the world of Walt Disney waited in a wistful *attroupement* where formerly the papier-mâché Santa Claus had stood.

In the space around her chair and the Christmas tree the spirits of her lately departed guests still moved, very much as their bodies had moved during their visit. Molly still extended a cupless acorn to Ada and asked, "Mom-mom, what is it? What is it? I found it under that big tree in the woods." Bruce—who had just learned to walk alone—and his mother continued to circle the room in parallel orbits, each so quietly busy that Ada, who seldom could combine busyness with silence, had watched in amazement. The baby, Jude, was asleep in his carry cot and had not begun to cry until Christopher settled the portable bed into the car's back seat and said, "I don't know when we'll come again. It's a long way to bring little children."

Now that she thought of Christopher's words, it occurred to her that sometimes when she had felt melancholy her father said, "Ada, you mustn't let your imagination run away with you." He rarely had been tactless to the point of saying more than that, yet his implication plainly was that a person who gave a free rein to her imagination might be stranded for life in the land of whimsey. Since neither he nor any of the other members of her family had given a free rein to their imaginations, it was almost certain that her stay in the land of whimsey would be a lonely one and therefore to be avoided at all costs. So it was that her survival began to depend more and more on using her father's formula for converting hindsight, foresight, and insight into wit that in her conversation—as it had in her father's—might pass for wisdom. Moreover, it now seemed to Ada that she had seen her father become a wise man just as surely as, in the seven years since his death, Christo-

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pher, his grandson and namesake, had become a well-known illustrator of children's books. At the same time, it seemed as though, along with the old house and its furniture, she had inherited the responsibility of pretending to be more wise than, in reality, she was.

But if, considering her own fundamental foolishness, the notion that she could follow in her father's footsteps was presumptuous, it was an idea so charged with enchantment that Ada could not resist it.

BESIDE her chair in the library of the big house, a rose-colored hibiscus was blooming in a wooden tub. It was both lovely and unreal in the special way that a tree in full bloom in December often is, and Ada was thrilled by the sight.

More than that, the presence of *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis* in bloom for the winter holidays was—as were the Matisse above the fireplace and a recently bought "Dictionary of the English Language" by Samuel Johnson—indicative of the long way *she* had come. Planes, by reducing the travel time, tended to be misleading. But the distance between Christopher's home and her own had not lessened in the years since Jude was a baby and Molly had found an acorn under a big tree. The distances between people and places rarely changed. The belief that they could be shortened by an effort of the will was one of the many ways she had been tempted to let her imagination run away with her. Thanks to her father's advice, however, she had not yielded to that temptation.

Beyond the hibiscus, books lined the wall and, having taken one at random from its shelf, she read that "for the ancient Greeks, potted plants were tokens of yearly rebirth."

Even without a picture of Eros giving a bunch of seedlings to a young female who, presumably, was expecting to attend a celebration of Adonic rites, Ada almost certainly would have been reminded of Marty—Marty, who happily had lived long enough to see Joan and Christopher at home in this handsome house.

When, during their long premarital acquaintance, had Marty said, "We must have a son—like you"? Having stated this paradox, he had smiled the gentle smile that he might have smiled seeing her beside the blooming hibiscus. It was the smile she missed now and would miss for as long as she lived. It was the smile that had filled Marty's eyes whenever they spoke of Christopher.

Snow had fallen during the early morning and clung to every limb and ledge so that, incredibly, the dainty twigs of a smoke tree close to the front door supported miniature skyscrapers of snow.

At the age of six, Ada had attended a school where the teacher, whenever it was snowing, invited his pupils to join him in singing a hymn of praise in which the words "snow, snow, beautiful snow" were repeated again and again until the wonder that had befallen them became more nearly endurable. Unfortunately, she could not remember the tune, and instead of singing it she called attention to the snow in the way that her father habitually had called everyone's attention to the passage of time.

Later, Molly announced to Ada that the time to open their gifts had come, and she joined the others in the big room where a mountain of presents shone from the shade of the Christmas tree. When all of the packages had been opened and admired and their wrappings taken away, Jude, under Joan's direction, lit the candles on a balsam fir that Bruce had cut and brought from the hill beyond the house. The tree's top touched the ceiling and its branches held both candles and birds.

When it was time for Ada to leave, she said, "This is the nicest Christmas I've ever had."

At this, Joan laughed and raised her eyebrows, while Christopher—like his mother a holiday guest in the lovely house—looked on, a sober, thoughtful man in a blue coat.

—LINDA GRACE HOYER

"It's not supposed to be any kind of look. It's just me."

•

A CHRISTMAS SONG

Holy Infant,
Do you want more lullabies?
Your sleep seems safe;
All of us, we sleep in heaven—
The sheep even sing, the
Cows sing silent through
The grass.

Holy Infant, do you dream?
In our dreams, shining
Airplanes plummet into
Water, we watch as infants
From the breastlike hills, we
Scream and wake and
On your birthday sing
A dreamy lullaby,
Dreaming
Some day you
Will be born.

—JAMES MANNING

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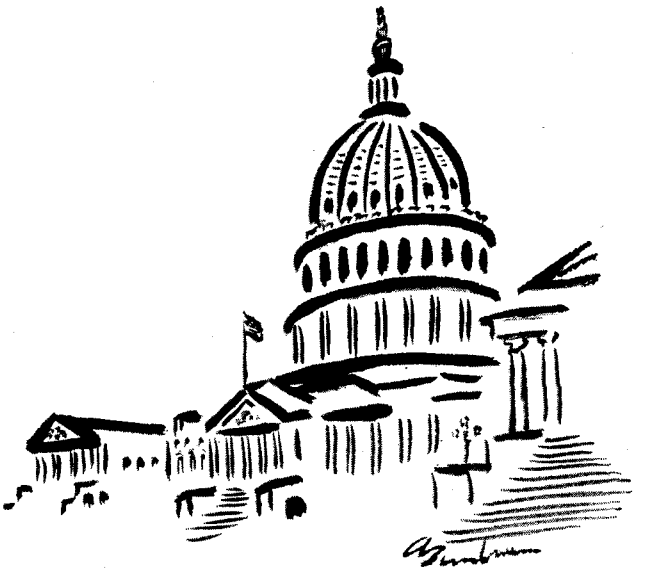
A REPORTER AT LARGE

MOVING OUT, MOVING IN



NOVEMBER 17, 8:30 A.M.: OUTSIDE THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE BUILDING (NORTH)

PARKING in Washington is a desperate matter. On C Street between Second and Third, next to the massive H.E.W. Building (North), where the Carter transition forces opened their headquarters yesterday, there is above each parked car a lift supporting a second car. A visitor to this city, alert for visible signs of transition, concludes that the bottom cars must be Ford Administration vehicles and the ones on top Carter's. Looking east from the steps of H.E.W. (North), the visitor sees first the harsh geometry of the new H.E.W. Building (South Portal)—eight stories of coarse concrete with deep-set windows in the Administrative Fortress style. Along its sidewalk, a jogger with a backpack runs past ceremonial boxes of dirt containing withered stalks of dead, brown corn, and, in front, facing the Mall, there is a touch of Aztec: a series of steps form a low pyramid terminating in a broad platform. There is nothing on the platform, nor any clue as to what rites are performed there. Nearby is a six-foot-high Little Red Schoolhouse with a shingled roof, and next to it is a big white space-communications hemisphere (both part of a display called "Education via Satellite"). At a large, round pool on the Mall, seagulls wheel and descend onto the reflection of Ulysses S. Grant's statue. The noise of jets rumbles across the Potomac from National Airport. Above the flow of buses, cars, and bikes rise the intricate glass roofs of the Botanic Gardens—a bulbous Victorian delight—and, above that, the Capitol itself, its prodigious dome soaring into the morning sky. Transitions are nothing new around here.

9 A.M.: FIFTH FLOOR OF H.E.W. (NORTH)

HALFWAY down a broad, two-hundred-yard-long corridor of wall-to-wall burnt-orange carpet are two desks, with a receptionist at each. They guard the entrance to a branch corridor that leads to the offices of the Carter transition team. Congress has appropriated two million dollars to the Carter people for transition costs, and green signs on the wall suggest where some of the money is going: TRANSITION DIRECTOR, POLITICAL COÖRDINATION, PRESS, CONGRESSIONAL RELATIONS, OFFICE OF V-P-ELECT, ADMINISTRATION, AGENCY LIAISON, POLICY ANALYSIS, TALENT INVENTORY PROGRAM.

Two middle-aged men—well scrubbed and double-knitted, with vigorously shined shoes—approach one of the receptionists. "Ma'am," says the first, heartily, "we're interested in the personnel requirements of the Carter Administration?" The two optimists are sent down to Talent Inventory, where a young man at a desk hands them a single-sheet application form to fill out and mail in. (No interviews at this time.) The questions, printed in green, include "Race (Caucasian, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, Black, American Indian/Alaskan Native)," "Voting Registration," and "Honors" as well as "Work Experience" and "Civic, Community and Political Activities." (The young man handing out the forms is an M.I.T. graduate student, who "got interested in Carter when I heard about his zero-base budgeting.") Only a couple of thousand jobs will become available with the switch in Administrations, according to the Civil Service Commission, but more than ten thousand aspirants have made application so far. (Things were a lot simpler in the Buchanan-Lincoln transition. Office seekers hung around Willard's Hotel, where the President-elect was staying, and when Lincoln emerged they rushed up to him and asked for work.) The two middle-aged men—with their two forms—walk back down the hall, passing through a crowd of TV crews and reporters, who are restlessly waiting to be allowed into the Carter offices for a first look since the transition people moved in, yesterday. So far, the whole operation has been as closely guarded as the Manhattan Project. The TV teams turn on their lights and film anything that moves: the two receptionists, the policemen who are standing by, a girl carrying two hanging plants. Barry Jagoda, the transition spokesman for Carter, climbs on a desk and addresses the crowd. "In about five minutes, we're going to have a tour," he says. "We're going to show you the friendly administrator, the scenic mail-room. . . . I hope you'll be understanding." The press assumes a B.-M.T. rush-hour configuration in the vast hallway. The doors at last swing open, and all the reporters surge through. They are greeted by a scene reminiscent of the empty fort in "Beau Geste." Room after room is deskless, chairless, deserted. "When do we get to see some people?" asks Lesley Stahl, of CBS. "There's one," says somebody. Walter Kallaur, a transition aide, stands on a chair. "I handle space assignments," he says. "We have a hundred and thirty-eight professional staffers here now. Down that hall will be Jack Watson, the President-elect, the Vice-President-elect's staff. . . . This will be a conference room. . . . Down that hall will be Hamilton Jordan, the Talent Inventory Program, Congressional Relations. . . ." In a room marked "MESSAGE CENTER" there are several people, an old wooden mailbox, its pigeonholes stuffed with yellow message forms, and a large piece of cardboard on which somebody has drawn a map in Magic Marker, showing the location of about fifty-five offices, with names written in, some in pencil. "Where is everybody today?" asks a reporter in the hall. "Out hunting for housing," replies an aide.

11 A.M.: IN A TAXI

A LOT of time in this spread-out city is spent travelling from one place to another in taxis—often with

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other passengers, who are accumulated en route. Drivers here design their own cargo load, and if you are headed for Georgetown, say, the driver is apt to pick up anybody who is not definitely going to Alexandria, in the opposite direction. This particular driver is a grizzled elderly man who is still enraged at Richard Nixon. "He tried to be *slick!*" he exclaims. "Why'd he want to be *slick*? He was the President of the *country*." He pounds the dashboard, and then he laughs. "President of the country, and he *still* wants to be slick!"

11:30 A.M.: The White House, West Wing

STANDING before a blue curtain on a low, carpeted platform, Ron Nessen, the White House press secretary, is giving his daily briefing to about thirty reporters, who are seated around a room that resembles the lobby of a small but respectable hotel. Nessen makes announcements: the Eagles—a group of heavy contributors to the Republican Party—were given a reception at the White House yesterday, and they presented John Connally with an award (a painting of a bald eagle) for having done most to help raise money for the Republican National Committee; President Ford will spend the weekend at Vice-President Rockefeller's Pocantico Hills estate, part of which has been designated a National Historical Landmark. Then Nessen accepts questions. On strategic-arms limitation: "We continue to work toward the conclusion of the SALT treaty." Will it be completed before the new Administration comes in? "I just don't want to characterize the degree of optimism," replies Nessen. On President Ford's plans after January 20th: "He's not rushing. . . . He's concentrating on Presidential duties."

Several reporters claim that they were denied access to Nessen's office yesterday afternoon, following an incident that struck an un-transitionlike note. According to some accounts, Jody Powell, Carter's press secretary, having been invited to pay a call on Nessen, waited discreetly in Nessen's office while Nessen conducted a briefing. After the session, reporters found Powell in the office and began asking him questions. Nessen, returning to his office, was outraged to find a Democratic press conference going on in the Republican White House. Argument ensued. Nessen yelled at everybody to get out, and finally told his secretary to summon the White House police. (She didn't.) On the platform now, Nessen flatly denies having barred anyone from his office after the Powell incident, and the reporters get mad all over again. Nessen remains bland and cool, reiterating his denial. "You have just lied to us!" one reporter shouts. There is a pause. Nessen stands silent. Then, suddenly, he says, "I think . . . I will have to confess." A sigh of relief goes through the room. Nessen smiles. "I feel cleansed!" he declares. His expression becomes exuberant. "I feel almost . . . *born again!*" There is applause, laughter, and approval, and the briefing is over.

Note from a Bicentennial Guidebook

WHEN the Federal Government transferred from Philadelphia to the District of Columbia in 1800 . . . its staff [was] 135 clerks and a few higher officials.—*Visitors Guide of Washington (The Nation's Capital in Natural Color)*

November 18, 9:45 A.M.: Fifth Floor of H.E.W. (North)

THE great corridor is full of rolled-up rugs, filing cabinets, boxes of Xerox paper, desks on dollies, and lots of chairs, on which handymen are sitting, awaiting instructions. On a wall is a memo:

To: All Staff
Re: Check cashing privileges
You may cash checks at the following locations . . .

A receptionist asks an appointment seeker his name. "Say-yum," he begins, then spells it: "S—A—M." A woman goes by with a lampshade.

In a large office of the Talent Inventory Program, there are forty five-foot-high steel filing cabinets. Slips of paper marked "Reviewed," "For Review," or "Pending" are Scotch-Taped to them. In the middle of the floor sit fifteen open cardboard boxes, jammed with file folders. Each folder has a name on the tab, as well as several round stickers—red, yellow, orange, green—indicating how many processes it has passed through. Across the hall, Matthew B. Coffey—a tall, rangy man who is on leave as president of the Association of Public Radio Stations, who once worked on recruiting top-level executives for Lyndon Johnson, and who is director of Carter's talent search—says, "There are two kinds of operations going on here. One is to take care of everybody that is interested—and we've discovered that America has at least ten thousand immodest people—which is a processing operation. The more important, from my standpoint, is the professional recruiting operation. It's a positive-outreach effort. Three hundred and thirty top-level jobs will

"I'm going to level with you, Mom."

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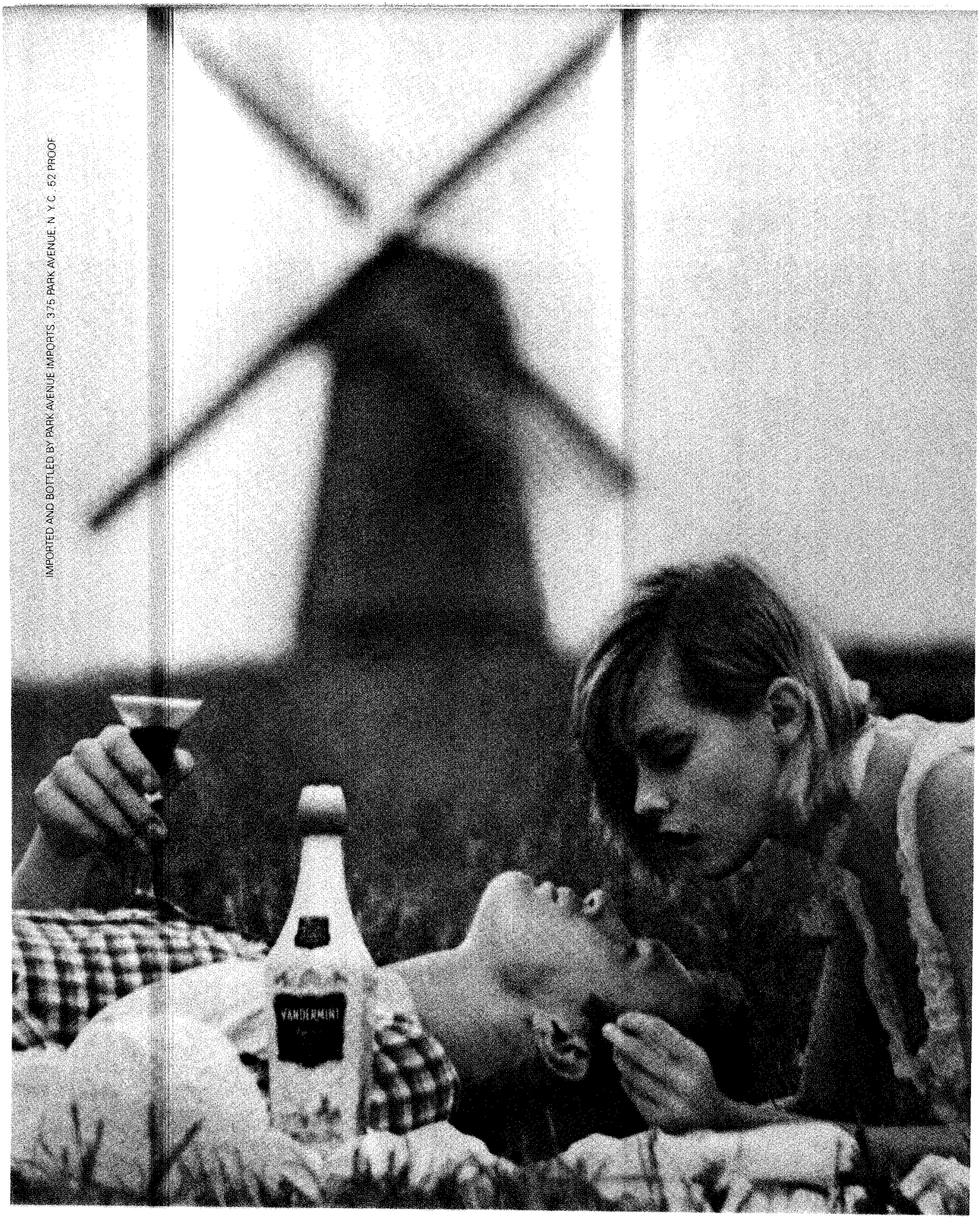

Vandermint isn't good because it's imported. It's imported because it's good.

The minted chocolate liqueur from Holland.

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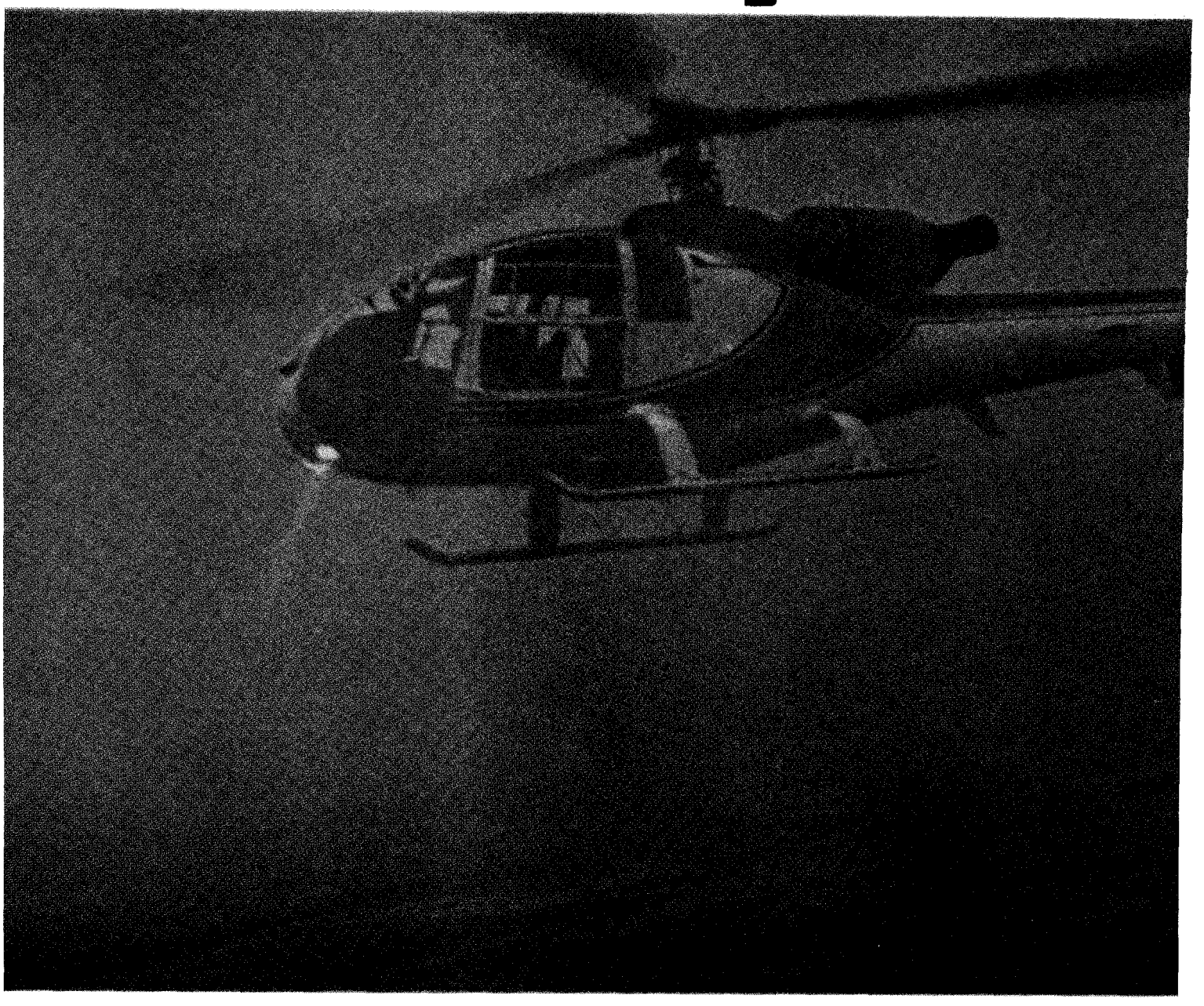
We invented a way to keep this helicopter flying on days when even the birds are grounded.



A new Sperry autopilot lets light helicopters fly in weather they could never fly in before.

One of the busiest segments of the busy helicopter industry is corporate helicopters, light choppers seating four or five passengers. They get businessmen where they're going almost as fast, and a lot more flexibly and economically, than standard fixed-wing aircraft.

But weather is a problem. Most regular planes and transport helicopters equipped with autopilots, can keep flying through rain and fog. But there wasn't an autopilot for light helicopters. Until now.

Sperry Flight Systems has developed the first integrated autopilot-instrument system for light

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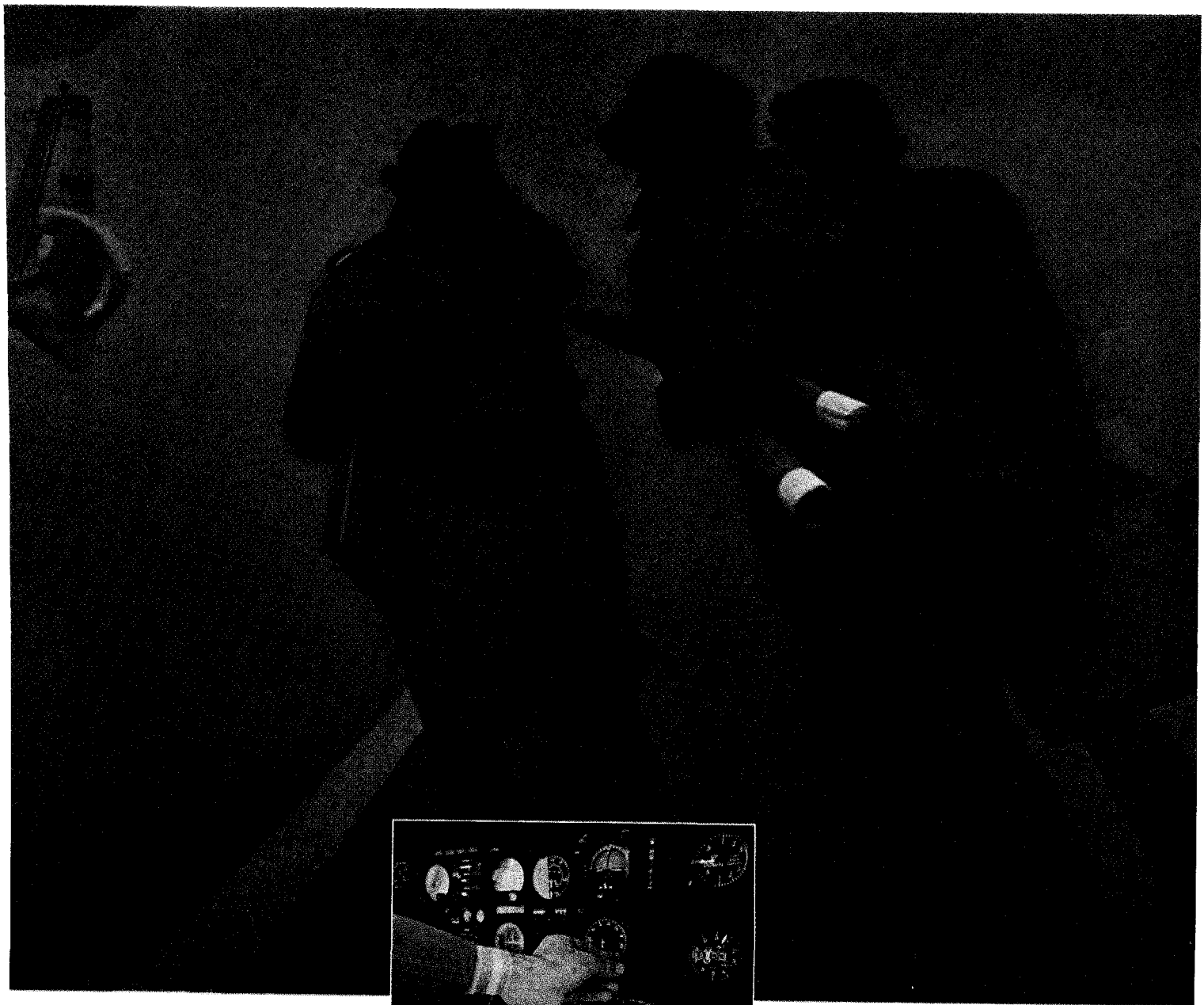

helicopters. The first to use it is the Gazelle, by Aerospatiale Helicopter Corporation. With the new Sperry system, the Gazelle can fly with only one pilot, in IFR weather that would otherwise keep it, and its businessmen passengers, on the ground.

Another demonstration of the big idea at Sperry Rand Corporation: Making machines do more, so man can do more. It's the common purpose that makes Sperry, Sperry Flight Systems, Sperry Univac, Sperry Remington, Sperry Vickers and Sperry New Holland add up to the Sperry Rand Corporation, 1290 Avenue of the Americas, New York, N.Y. 10019.

SPERRY

SPERRY RAND CORPORATION

MAKING MACHINES DO MORE, SO MAN CAN DO MORE.

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CANADIAN WHISKY, A BLEND, 6 YEARS OLD, 86.8 PROOF. SEAGRAM DISTILLERS CO., N.Y.C.

Seagram's V.O. presents seven old Christmas Classics. And one new one.

Yes, Virginia, There is a...
Editor Francis Church's letter in 1897 to 8 year old Virginia became a classic when the New York Sun reprinted it every Christmas for 50 years.

St. Nick's Day, Dec. 6th:
Bishop Nicholas was imprisoned for his faith, and later sainted for working miracles. His day was blended with Christmas and the myth of Santa Claus.

The Christmas Tree:
In the 1650's German Pilgrims brought their Tannenbaum (Christmas Tree) tradition to the new land, long before the practice took root in England.

The Seagram's V.O. Gift Classic

The 1976 V.O. gift package is the newest Christmas classic. (And the Gift Classic container—with a bottle of V.O. inside—is yours at no extra cost.) Like the taste of V.O., it's both distinctive and unique. A fitting way to celebrate being America's Favorite Canadian for over 25 years.

Pass the Toast, Please:
The Wassail Bowl was a traditional Christmas drink served in medieval England. Floating in it were pieces of toast. Hence, "toasting," a formal affirmation of friendship. In the same way today, we affirm friendships by taking up a glass.

"Silent Night":
Christmas Eve, and the church organ was broken. So Austria's Father Mohr, with guitarist Franz Gruber, wrote "Silent Night" for Midnight Mass.

The First Christmas Card:
In 1843, Sir Henry Cole's idea for a Christmas card was designed by artist John Horsley, then lithographed, and hand-colored. About 1000 were sold.

Merry Saturnalia:
Before the birth of Christ there was a December celebration called "Saturnalia." It paid tribute to...you guessed it... the god Saturn.

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be vacant. It's a job-driven process, not a candidate-driven process. Not 'He's really a great guy—where do we plug him in?' The job-definition process has really been going on since June, so we've had the benefit of lead time. We were not looking at people; we were studying positions, so we could start recruiting. Agencies' problems affect the way you recruit, so we have to find out the nature of the job and its problems. What are the major issues within the department? We find that people are more than happy to give us their views. You build a source reference list, and it keeps expanding. You try to cast out your net broadly, without being so presumptuous as to call up the people you're going to replace. A lot of information comes through previous Democratic incumbents, who have had experience and who give us an outside view. We use cross-reference and triangulation: if you talk to six people, you get a reasonably good perspective. In the case of candidates, we get a minimum of three references from each stage of a man's career. We do completed staff work, so that when Governor Carter gets a recommendation he'll also get an overview of the position—what it is and where it is at this point in its history. A Cabinet recommendation might take the form of a five-page memo, with decision blocks for Governor Carter to check, such as 'I want to interview him,' 'I want more information,' and so on. There are forty of us in this office. We're experts at producing paper. I hope the contents are useful to Governor Carter."

1 P.M.: THE WOMAN'S NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC CLUB, 1526 NEW HAMPSHIRE AVENUE, N.W.

THREE hundred and fifty members and guests are having lunch in the dining room. The wallpaper depicts Greek columns, and even the real columns in the room have wallpaper Greek columns. Clark Clifford, the Washington lawyer and Presidential adviser, and Jack Watson, the director of the Carter transition, who is today's guest speaker, enter the crowded room. Clifford is tall and sleek, with silver hair. He wears a regimental tie, a superbly tailored gray suit, and a halo of omniscience. As Watson—curly-haired, boyish, bright-eyed, and handsome—stands beside Clifford, it looks like Jack Armstrong getting his picture taken next to Mount Rushmore. They sit at the speakers' table, and while Clifford quickly charms the women next to him, Watson works on his speech—gazing upward, mouthing some phrases experimentally, smiling to himself, returning to his notes. The women on his right and left eat quietly. Presently, Clifford is introduced. He is suave and amusing, tells three successful anecdotes, and introduces Watson, saying, "I find him intelligent, knowledgeable, and perceptive."

After acknowledging Clifford's introduction and paying him respect, Watson says, "These remarks will not be about policy but about process. My role is to operate as a staff person to others, who will be policymakers." He describes the diversion of some hundred and fifty thousand dollars in Carter campaign funds last summer into transition study, analysis, and planning "on the contingency he would be elected," and goes on, "It *could* have been the largest academic exercise in the history of this country. . . . By nature, Jimmy Carter is a planner. You will see that propensity demonstrated time and again. He felt it would be irresponsible not to do it; the stakes were too high. . . . He felt we had to exert ourselves to the fullest to prepare, because there's been abroad in this country a crisis of confidence in policy and in institutional processes—disbelief, cynicism, and despair. He felt a responsibility to restore confidence—to say what he means, and do what he says. . . . I began in late July to pull together a very small group to assist in contingency planning—which might not occur. I was blessed with good decisions on those people, people who had their egos in control. Our time frame was August 1st to November 1st, and our task was to identify those action-forcing events that would require a new President to be informed and to move. With a lot of help, we reached out in concentric circles of contact, asking what are the key issues in government organization, domestic social programs, business and labor, internal security and defense, foreign policy, intelligence, natural resources and energy, the budget. . . . After we identified the issues, we got people's opinions. A hundred and thirty-five foreign-affairs experts submitted five-to-eight-page options papers; we then synthesized them into thirty-five papers, and bumped those back out for opinion and reaction. The results were sent to the President-elect, and we did the same in six other major areas. A process of consultation and collaboration with Congress was begun, to modify and refine issues and options. We will have a group of professional people working with the outgoing Administration in budget and management. . . . Another group is establishing linkages with the bureaucracies for liaison and information flow. . . . We are being received by the Ford Administration with a spirit of openness and courtesy." The audience applauds.

Watson continues, "President Wilson said, 'Living the life of a free people is a strenuous thing.' I have developed a profound conviction that the American people are a resource that needs to be tapped and retapped, challenged and rechallenged. . . . There are no easy problems. All the easy problems seem to have been solved. There are not a lot of villains. We have ourselves to blame, to the extent we fail to exert ourselves as a free people. . . . We need commonly held dreams, plain talk, and forceful leadership. . . . I think Governor Carter approaches his task in a spirit of openness, with high aspirations—a strange mixture of pride and profound humility." Toward the end of his speech, Watson's voice becomes fervent; the language is no longer that of management processes but is more like a religious invocation, a credo. He finishes, gets enthusiastic applause, then answers written questions from the audience.

"Why is there only one woman on your staff?" is the first question.

"What a short honeymoon!" says Watson, to laughter, and he says that they will be aiming for a staff of thirty-five to thirty-eight per cent women, twelve to fourteen per cent blacks.

"How do we get jobs?" is the next question.

"Hamilton Jordan!" exclaims Watson. There is a roar of laughter, since Watson and Jordan, the campaign director, have been reported to be in a power struggle. "I'd like to give you his home telephone number," says Watson, grinning.

There is a question about Clark Clifford's contribution to the transition.

Watson says, "Someone said once, 'The way you make progress is by standing on the shoulders of the giants who went before.' That's what we're doing." Applause for Clifford.

What will Watson do in the new Administration?

"Transition people usually self-destruct," he replies. "My name may be forgotten by next Wednesday." He says of Carter, "He expects to operate through a strong Cabinet. . . . The success of the Administration will be largely dependent on what kind of people he chooses to help him. . . . After all is said and done, after all the proposals are

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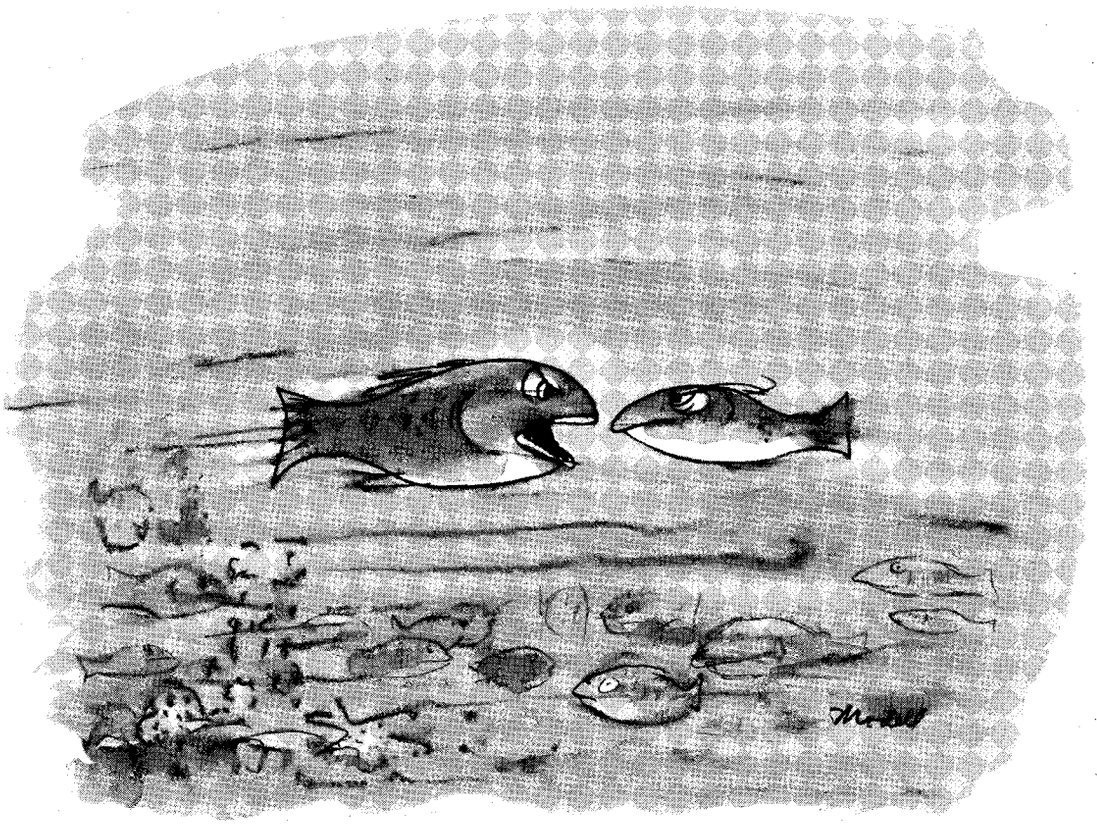

"You're not the only fish down here, you know."

• •

shaped, there is a core of one thing that matters: a core of people open and honest, intelligent and wise." The lunch is over.

Clifford departs in a chauffeur-driven Fleetwood. Watson greets people. He is quick at absorbing names—especially first names—and very alert; he has a ready smile, and gives the impression that he has less veneer than many politicians (unless lack of veneer *is* his veneer). A reporter for a newspaper chain asks Watson about transition-staff salaries, declaring that the figures should be available under the Freedom of Information Act, since the personnel are federal employees now. Watson says the figures are not ready yet. The reporter says he wants them *today*. "Well," replies Watson, with finality, "you're not going to get them." A woman clutching a small piece of paper and a pencil says, "I'd like to have Hamilton Jordan's home phone number, please."

2 P.M.: Phone Booth

PHONE calls in Washington cost fifteen cents. Presumably, it is believed that communications at the seat of government are worth five cents more than conversations in, say, New York. Many phones are push-button, however—a quantum leap in fun over the old kind—and perhaps justify the additional outlay on the ground of sheer tactile grooviness. One's digits fly over the buttons, and there is a gratifying sense of participation in the space age as the aria of *beep-boop-bip-bop-beep* ripples in the ear. (The phone number of Carter headquarters is *bop-bip-bup-bap-bop-beep-beep*.) For somebody trying to conduct business with transition personnel, it is imperative to carry a large store of nickels and dimes, since they are generally in a meeting, have stepped away from their desk, or are winging their way to Georgia. As a result, reporters here stagger about under an appalling burden of small change, bent over like Quasimodo. The foolhardy journalist who tries to beat the system by calling Plains, Georgia, will regret it. He will be greeted by one of a number of soft and lovely Southern voices—cordial, kind, and as whispery as Spanish moss drifting from the limbs of a live oak—and then find himself on a hold as timeless as the Old South. The quickest and most practical way to reach a Carter official in Georgia is to walk down there and address him directly.

5:30 P.M.: The White House, West Wing

ALTHOUGH this is the business end of the White House—the offices of the President and his top aides are here—the visitors' lobby is empty, except for a receptionist, and very still. Occasionally, the receptionist's telephone chimes gently, and sometimes faint music is heard coming from a radio in a nearby cloakroom, but the only consistent sound is the deliberate ticking of a grandfather clock in one corner. There are chairs and sofas enough for a dozen visitors. On the walls hang paintings of American scenes—the Delaware Water Gap by Inness, a Maine seascape by Homer. The principal feature of the room is a large, gloomy cabinet with glass doors. It displays the White House porcelain service—plates with bird pictures, mostly—of Rutherford B. Hayes.

Upstairs, in a white-walled office with a gold rug, blue easy chairs around a coffee table, a desk, and soft, lulling music coming from twin speakers on a bookshelf, Michael Raoul-Duval, a healthy-looking young Californian who has served in the White House for six years and is currently special counsel to the President, says, "Transition is a misnomer. There is a transfer of duties, responsibilities, and power—with the emphasis on the first two—that occurs when the President-elect takes office, and not one iota is transferred before that. What you call 'transition' is a planning and preparation for transfer. The President has made it clear we have a really very solid responsibility to aid in every way we can. Obviously, one of the major strengths of this country is that we do change, and it's a great opportunity for us to strengthen this country by doing it in a strong and dignified way. The Presidency is personal, not institutional. You can hold somebody accountable. Our responsibility is to be genuinely helpful and seek out opportunities to be coöperative, and to give advice, but we have to be careful we don't overload the circuit. There's a danger when the incoming people get inundated with information; it's hard for them to recognize what they really need to know. On the other hand, there are some things that people here know that *must* be volunteered. So you draw the line between being unhelpful—by being too helpful—and just

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"Today I am going to be green."

Bonnie Lee Pett Harris. Hempstead, New York

"Today I am going to be green. I always enjoy being green best of all. Yesterday I was yellow and the day before brown. It's really nice being able to be a different color every day. My brother is pink today and when we go to school together I imagine that we shall look somewhat like a rose with its petals, the pink and green together.

"I heard that long ago, maybe a hundred years or something like that, people couldn't change color each day and had to be either brown or white or black or yellow. How dull that must have been! Imagine! It's just so much nicer now the new way, everyday being a different color, and never knowing ahead what color you are going to be.

"My great-grandmother used to tell my mother about how people tried to band together by color. What confusion there would be if people tried that now. Everyday you would have to try to find new bands and the next day they would be broken by the color changes. Now we just all enjoy each other because we do, and that's it, and the colors only help to make the parties pretty. I'm happy it's like this, aren't you?"

Several months ago we began our Tricentennial Program by asking for your thoughts on life in America by the year 2076. We anticipated some very interesting predictions of the future. And that's exactly what we received. More than 50,000 responses came in from every state in the country.

Your ideas were intelligent and imaginative and show a significant insight into the problems and opportunities that face the nation.

One request we made was to imagine that when you got up this morning, you found that it was the year 2076. We asked you to tell us of the many changes you saw and what you felt about this new world of the future.

The responses we received proved to be most imaginative. And we wanted to share one of our favorites.

We plan to make a book available containing some to the most interesting letters we've received. If you would like to obtain a free copy, please write to us.

Please note that all ideas submitted shall become public property without compensation and any restriction on use or disclosure.

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sitting back. An easy commonsense test is: If I were in their shoes, what would I want to be told? Jack Marsh, a counsellor to the President, has been designated head of the White House operation. Every department of the executive branch, from the State Department down to Fine Arts, will appoint a transition officer who speaks in behalf of that department. Then Jack Watson will designate one or two or three of his people for each of these departments. We will maintain an overview to make sure that good coöperation is in fact carried out. Jim Connor, the White House staff secretary, will handle the mechanical aspects, and I, as special counsel, will be ready to step in if a problem crops up. We will try to exercise control to protect the ongoing nature of government."

Raoul-Duval was involved in the transition from Nixon to Ford. "I had been an associate director of the Domestic Council in '73 and '74, and I was ready to get out, for largely personal reasons, but, because of the nature of the Watergate period, we felt a tremendous responsibility to the country to do the transfer well. When President Ford came in, I was heavily involved in energy, and he asked me to work with him on it. It became the centerpiece of his 1975 State of the Union Address. I developed a strong personal feeling for him, and, largely because of him, I stayed on. I identified with his view of the country, and the constraints he was doing his job under—recession, the opposition of Congress. He was a man who was not elected. He was willing and had the extreme courage to tell the country the truth. A lot of good policy was made. He took the hard way but the right way. It required near-term cost for long-term profit. He never lost that characteristic of honesty, regardless of what it cost him. I think he's very disappointed by the election. He's never lost any big challenge in his life. What he does, he wins—or he doesn't take it on. It's a tremendous disappointment. He didn't thirst after power. In fact, I think he's been, psychologically, the perfect President in terms of judgment, experience, and sense of people. There's a tranquillity in Ford that only comes when a man is comfortable with himself. He's a good man and a hell of a nice guy. He is now, and will grow as, a major leader of the nation. I've been lucky to be here, and I'm going to walk out with a great sense of accomplishment from an unparalleled period of difficulty. I feel very indebted both to the President and—I don't mean to sound corny—to the nation. But I'm glad to be going on to something new." He pauses. "I wish I was leaving President Ford here, but I'm not."

November 22, 7:30 A.M.

Hotel-Room mornings look like night; heavy curtains hide the dawn. The visitor is a spaceman: his air is temperature-controlled; his door is locked, his soap is wrapped in paper, his glass is sanitary-sealed. A cabinet holds space drinks, space snacks—mini-bottles, tiny bags of nuts. When the all-night countdown ends, Visitor Control informs him via telephone that it is time to rise.

The visitor reaches for TV, and the news appears; reality bursts in. *Today is November 22nd.* Dallas, 1963. That, too, was a time of transition: the end of bold and jaunty expectations, the overture to bitter years when the nation could not live with itself or with others. Then, five years later, a flash of hope again: the brother, endowed with qualities that seemed precisely right for such a time. Toward the end of each November and at the beginning of every June, that twice-inflicted loss still stalks our memories.

Morning: Outside Blair House

The White House, a few hundred yards away, is cold blue against the low morning sun. The old Executive Office Building, directly across Pennsylvania Avenue, is gray-lavender. The temperature is around thirty, and the few orange leaves left on the trees are shaking in the brisk wind. "Home of Francis Preston Blair (1791-1876)," says a plaque on the black iron fence in front of the four-story white Federal house. "Founder and editor of The Globe . . . a newspaper which championed democratic causes and vigorous journalism." Fifty or sixty journalists, vigorous and otherwise, are packed into a roped-off section of the sidewalk next to a green awning over the steps that lead up to the front door. Inside the house are Carter and his aides, who arrived last night for meetings today and tomorrow with President Ford, Administration officials, and leaders of Congress. Hour after hour, the reporters stand in the cold, shuffling from foot to foot. They are hung about with press cards and IDs, walkie-talkies, tape recorders, bandoliers of batteries; they carry notebooks, film cans, microphones, heavy lights, videotape cameras, thirty-five-millimetre cameras. For long periods, there is nothing to see except occasionally the silhouette of a Secret Service man in a window, but no one dares leave, for fear an official may arrive or depart without being quoted or photographed. The task for the press is physically uncomfortable, mentally stupefying, spiritually depleting; the end product of their diligence will be, at most, a few sentences in tomorrow's paper, a photograph, a brisk montage on evening TV. ("... ABC's Bill Brown has the story. . . ." *Story?*)

Greg Schneiders, Carter's personal aide, comes outdoors for a moment. In answer to a reporter's question, he says the Carter meetings are being held in a large room upstairs. Everybody within earshot writes this down. "What kind of a room?" asks the reporter. "It's very red," replies Schneiders, and he goes back inside.

James T. Lynn, Ford's Director of the Office of Management and Budget, comes down the steps, and pauses at a stand of microphones. "We discussed a wide range of matters," he explains as buses roar by on Pennsylvania Avenue. Pens skitter across notebooks, cameras roll, shutters snap—and almost immediately Lynn is gone. "What did he say?" cry the reporters in the rear. The information is passed back. "This is hot stuff," says a reporter, jumping up and down, trying to keep warm.

Marine Mammal Commission, 1625 I Street, N.W.

The official program for the game of job-seeking in this city is a yellow paperback called "Policy and Supporting Positions" and known as the "Plum Book." It is an indispensable guide for people who wish to serve the nation. According to the foreword, "An impression has developed that it is a list of 'political jobs,' or a 'Plum Book' connoting its use by a new Ad-

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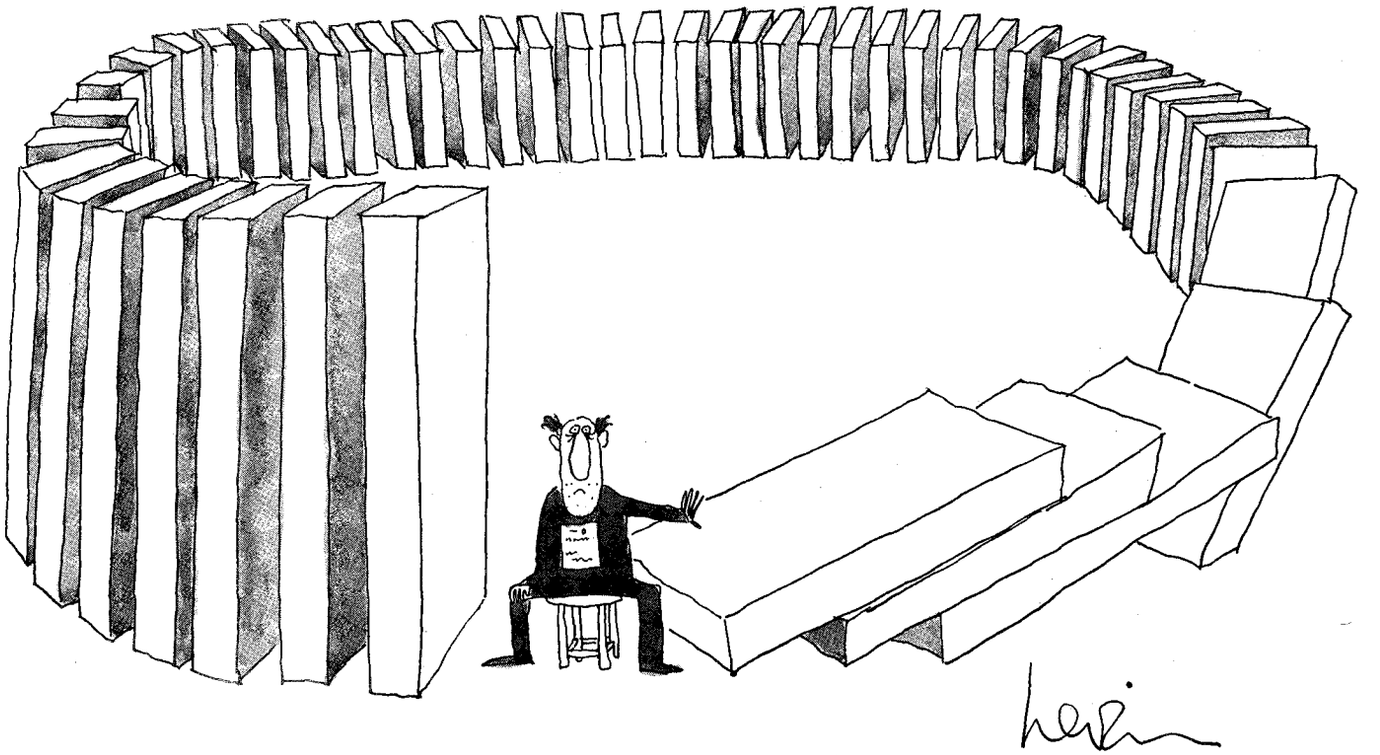

ministration to make appointments in the executive branch. To an extent this is true; individuals who serve at the pleasure of the President or as confidential assistants to Presidential appointees obviously hold 'political jobs' and they are listed herein. *Policy and Supporting Positions*, however, goes beyond that limited group. It is designed to list the jobs which are the leading positions in the United States Government." The volume, which was put together by the House Committee on Post Office and Civil Service, lists these positions—to pick, at random, the Commodity Futures Trading Commission—in this form:

Location: Washington
Position: Office of Policy Review, Special Assistant
Incumbent: Pamela J. Pecarich
Type of Appointment: C ["C" means "Positions of a confidential or policy determining character which are excepted from the competitive service, to which appointments may be made without examination by the Commission." The Commission is the Civil Service Commission.]
Grade or Salary: GS-15 [A GS-15 starts at $33,789 and escalates until, after eighteen years, a maximum of $37,347 is reached.]
Tenure & Expiration: [Not listed. This could be good, or it could be bad.]

A public-service hopeful flipping through the book and feeling insufficiently qualified for, say, deputy director of the Central Intelligence Agency ($44,000), and not wishing to go out of town to check on the opportunities at the Susquehanna River Basin Commission (the commissioner, who receives $37,800, is a Presidential appointee), might impulsively rush over to the Marine Mammal Commission, his mind filled with warm thoughts about walruses and whales, dusky, cobwebbed offices, leisurely hours. It would be a mistake.

The Marine Mammal Commission was started in 1972, when, according to its third annual report, "Congress established a national policy to encourage the development of marine-mammal populations to optimum sustainable levels, while maintaining the health and stability of the marine ecosystem." John R. Twiss, Jr., the executive director ($37,800), is a serious young man who has spent five years, off and on, in the Arctic and the Antarctic for the National Science Foundation and was with the International Decade of Ocean Exploration from 1970 to 1974. He speaks enthusiastically and knowledgeably about glaciology, seismology, penguin behavior, cosmic-ray research, and porpoise mortality in the tuna fisheries, but he is startled, and somewhat amused, to find his job listed in the "Plum Book." "My appointment was based on a competitive selection," he tells a visitor. "I've never felt like a political appointee. All the commissioners here are very, very highly qualified people, and they work very hard. I took this job because I was intrigued by the commission's novel approach to wildlife management: that wildlife should be managed on something other than maximum sustainable yield—that it should be on an ecosystem basis rather than a single-species approach, and on the attainment of optimum sustainable populations rather than on a maximum-sustainable-yield basis."

Departing from this highly specialized world of aerial pinniped counts, cetacean strandings, laser marking of marine mammals, radio tracking of whales, and the like, the job seeker could not be blamed for turning to something a little less specialized in his yellow book. The National Commission on Electronic Fund Transfers? The National Commission on Supplies and Shortages? The National Study Commission on Records and Documents of Federal Officials?

3 P.M.: The White House

THE Blair House press contingent is liberated at last from its sentinel duty on the sidewalk. Carter is to meet President Ford at the White House shortly, and, in anticipation of his arrival, the reporters swarm across Pennsylvania Avenue to the Northwest Gate. Guards inside a glass booth check credentials, and as each person is cleared a buzzer sounds, indicating that the reporter may pull open a small iron gate and pass into the White House grounds. (Vehicles enter through an adjacent, larger gate that is also operated electrically: a big steel tooth at the base of the gate descends into the ground; steel arms pull open both halves; the vehicle passes through; the arms close the gate; and the great tooth rises again.) Rex Granum and Kevin Gorman, young Carter press aides, are welcomed into the

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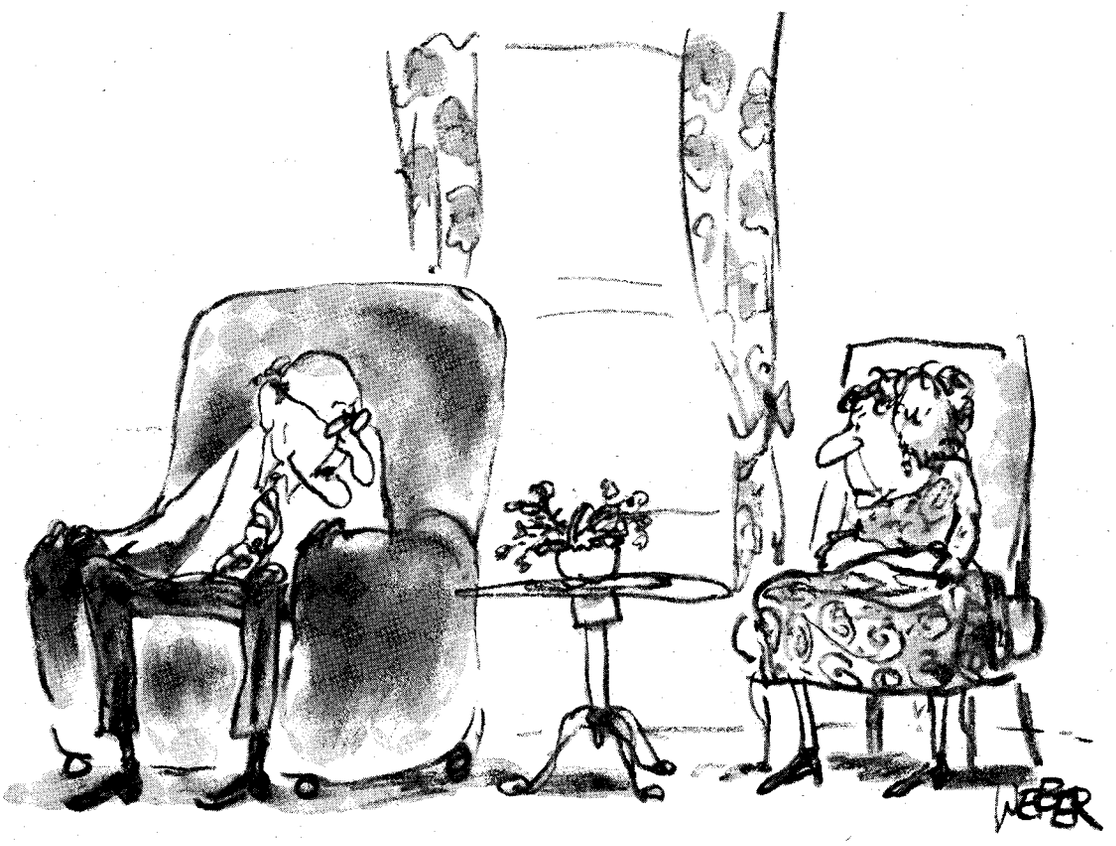

"I never said I was going to put you in the movies. I said I was going to take you to the movies."

• •

White House pressroom by Bill Roberts, an assistant to Nessen, and given a swift, friendly tour of the premises. "There usually isn't this much of a crowd," says Roberts, struggling through the mass of reporters. "Back here is the working area of the press, and there's more downstairs." They enter a room separated into glass cubicles. "This is U.P.I. That's A.P.," Roberts is saying. "And there are the dailies." They go up a ramplike carpeted corridor to the offices of Nessen and his aides. Returning, Gorman has the look of a child in a toy store. "It's rather awesome," he says.

3:15 P.M.: South Lawn of the White House

ON the south side of the White House, between the formal Rose Garden and the huge columns of the South Portico, there is a small, nearly invisible sheltered nook that must be, on a nice day, the pleasantest place around. It is far removed from the cool, impersonal Sheraton-Executive feeling of the rest of the White House. It could be a back yard in Charleston, Louisville, or Savannah. Tall boxwood hedges surround a circle of flagstone. An enormous magnolia tree, planted in Andrew Jackson's time, rises from the center; it is untouched by autumn—long, shiny green leaves still fill the place with shadow—and ivy rambles up the ancient trunk. Old cast-iron lawn chairs, painted white and repainted, sit about on the flagstone. Although the South Lawn fountains—seen through a break in the boxwood—are flinging frigid sprays into the chill wind now, and the Washington Monument beyond looks as cold as an icicle, it is tempting to imagine an August afternoon here, when the sun is hot and the city steams. Then the cool shadow of the magnolia and the high, sheltering hedges would provide a perfect spot to sit and have a tall glass of something good. Then, conceivably, this great, intimidating mansion—impersonal, unprivate, monumental—might briefly feel like home.

In a moment, President-elect Carter and his wife will drive up to the Diplomatic Entrance, a few yards away, and be greeted by President and Mrs. Ford. The Fords, who have lived here only a little while but may, perhaps, have come to feel that this is home, will show the Carters around the house. It is a common enough scene in America, but here there is bound to be a heightened sense of pain and loss: a poignancy. Ford has been rejected, after all; he must gather up his things, pack suitcases and boxes, and—with his family—leave. Now, by his own choice, he faces the new tenants, with his wife beside him. This ritual could have been avoided. It is not a tradition. Historically, there has been an abundance of outright hostility and lack of cooperation between successive Presidents. But that is not the Fords' way. More than anything else, perhaps, their time in this house has been marked by a plain, old-fashioned kind of personal decency and stoic courage, so now they're going to do this the way it's done back home in Grand Rapids: somebody's moving out; somebody's moving in; you try to help.

A hundred reporters are behind a rope on the lawn when a two-tone, black-and-caramel Continental rolls up to the awning of the Diplomatic Entrance, and Governor and Mrs. Carter get out. President and Mrs. Ford are waiting to greet them. Mrs. Carter wears a light-blue coat, Mrs. Ford a long fur. The two couples stand and face the cameras and the cold afternoon sun. The photographs are taken. Then the Fords step aside, allowing the Carters to enter the White House first. The Fords follow, and as they approach the doorway Ford puts his arm around his wife.

4:30 P.M.

SHIVERING reporters are waiting on the lawn in the growing dusk, fifty yards from the lighted Oval Office. Through one of the tall windows, framed in a V formed by the outstretched wings of a bronze eagle on a table near the window, Carter can be seen clearly, seated in a large armchair beneath a portrait of George Washington. Ford is not visible, and for a moment it appears that the President-elect is already *in situ*, on the job.

Before long, both men are outdoors. "I reëmphasized that my Administration would coöperate one hundred per cent," says Ford to the press.

"My judgment is the transition is going smoothly," Carter says, in his now familiar wavelike speech pattern: words break in half and fade. "There could not have been a better display of unity, friendship, and good will shown to me. . . . It's very reassuring to me and to the nation and, I think, to other

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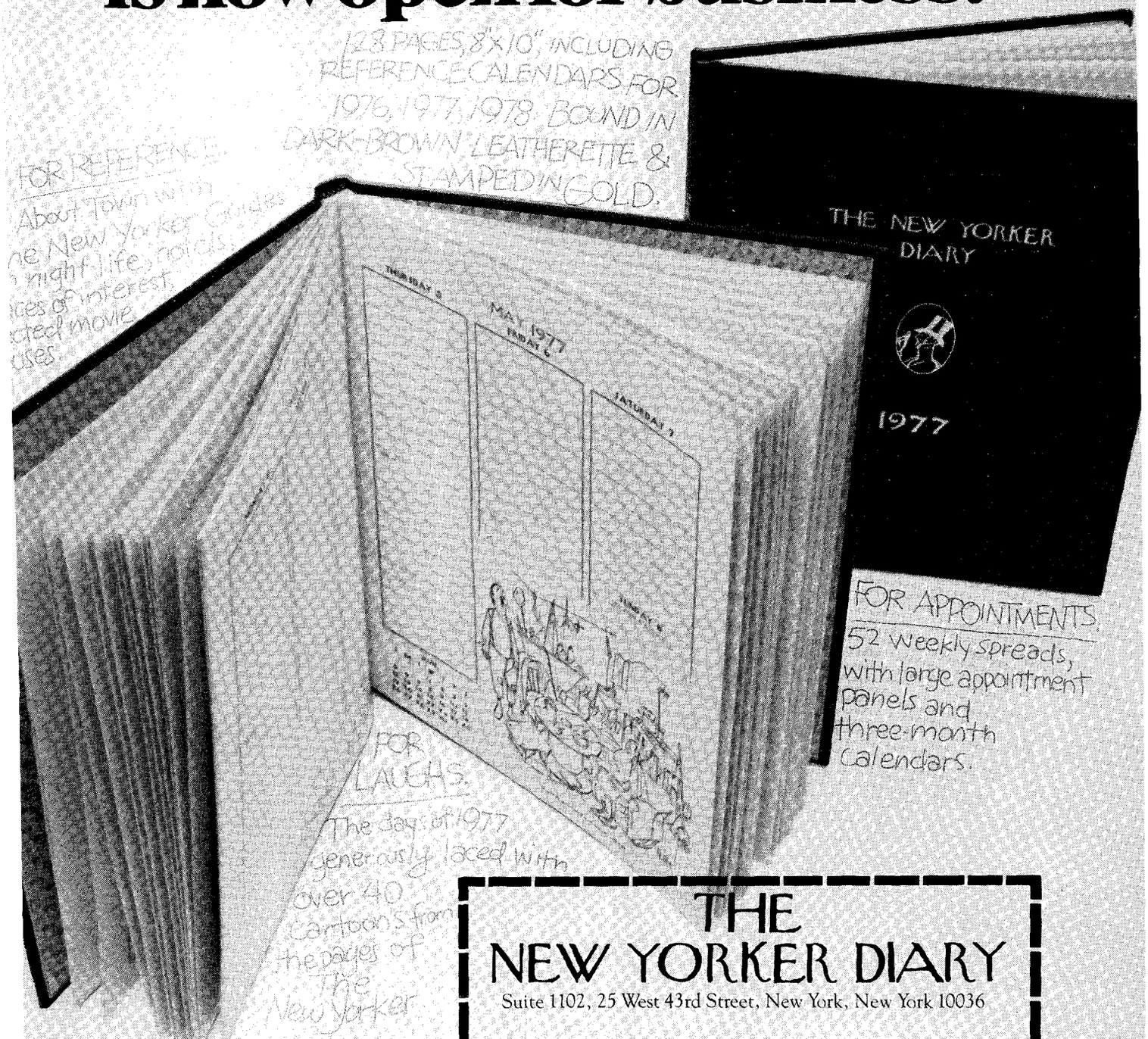
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nations." Carter drives off, and, shortly, through the big windows Ford can be seen, seated at his desk.

NOVEMBER 23, 9 A.M.:
THE CAPITOL

A YOUNG man in a hard hat, carrying a cardboard box of rolls and coffee, is walking in front of the Capitol toward a large white fifty-foot-high structure that looks like a cash register on stilts. Where the money drawer would be, there are rooms with picture windows; the keys above are open rows of seats; and the top part—where the numbers would appear—consists of more rooms with big windows. It faces the Inaugural platform that is being built over the central steps of the Capitol, about a hundred feet away. "We're building this for the media," says the young man, over the sound of hammering. "We started working on it two months ago. About fifteen of us are on it right now. We work for Skinker & Garrett; they've built Inauguration stands since 1913." The strange, stark, functional structure seems to stare implacably at the grand old building where Congress meets: *Times have changed*, it says. *To reach the people now, you'll have to go through me.*

A brief scuffle erupts suddenly between Capitol police and photographers who are trying to follow Governor Carter into the Senate wing, where he will confer this morning with congressional leaders. Some of the photographers are permitted to pass, and others take a different route along the side of the building. Young women from the Carter office are stationed at key junctures in the Capitol holding large cardboard signs that say "PRESS FOLLOW ME." Reporters hurry through the Brumidi corridors, pursuing the clues, and end up jammed together in the hall outside Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield's office. Visibility is nil; the best views belong to Henry Clay and John Calhoun, whose portraits hang on either side of the door.

By eleven-thirty, Carter has finished a conference with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and is headed for a lunch with the chairmen of the committees of the House of Representatives. Senator Joseph R. Biden, Jr., Democrat of Delaware, a young member of the Foreign Relations Committee, stands in the hall and tells some reporters about the conference. "There seemed to be very little difference between his position on foreign policy and the consensus of our committee. There was a significant discussion on what the role of the National Security Council should be. He concurred with us that the Secretary of the Treasury should be an integral part of policymaking, and I *think* he's going to put considerably more emphasis on world economics. He said Kissinger reluctantly agreed on this, incidentally. He gave us his private phone number, and he asked each of us to send him several names for Secretary of State, Treasury, and Defense. He made it clear about five times that he was the one who was going to be conducting foreign policy in his Administration, and I have *no* doubt that will be the case."

NOVEMBER 26: AN INTEROFFICE MEMO, CARTER TRANSITION

TO: Transition Staff
FROM: Barbara Blum
Because of the short period of time in which we have to accomplish a huge volume of work, it will be necessary to keep our offices open from 9 A.M. to 8 P.M.—Monday through Friday. 10 A.M. to 6 P.M. Sat.

NOVEMBER 30, 11:30 A.M.:
A CORRIDOR BENEATH H.E.W. (NORTH)

THE underground corridor is narrow and twisting, made of concrete. Joseph J. Levin, Jr., a short, dark thirty-three-year-old civil-rights lawyer from Montgomery, Alabama, is barrelling along it, stuffing IDs and credentials into his coat pockets. He is in charge of the Carter-transition policy analysis and agency liaison for the Justice Department, and at the end of this tunnel he hopes to find a garage and his car, for he is going to drive to an office in the Justice Department that has been allocated to his three-person group. "Our principal goal right now," says Levin, whipping around a corner, "is to go in and identify those critical issues that the Attorney General-designate will have to contend with immediately. Not long-range issues. They have a lot of ongoing events that will have to be reviewed. The second function is to establish personal contact, so the incoming A.G. can enter as frictionless an atmosphere as possible. The Justice Department is full of career people. They gave us a slide show last week, and it turns out less than seven per cent of them are lawyers. In a new Administration, the top-level people are subject to being replaced. U.S. Attorneys are generally replaced. But a lot of other people stay."

Levin locates his car, and drives out of the garage. "There aren't any guidelines to follow," he says. "The name of the game is to find out within the agency what the problems are, where they lie. We're checking our assumptions against the reality." He drives across the Mall. "We'll put all this into the form of an expanded briefing book for the incoming A.G. and his or her staff. Some issues the President-elect will need to know about personally; if we can, we'll identify those, and they'll be presented to him. We're not decisionmakers—we're information-gatherers. When the A.G. is selected, he may say, 'Levin, I want the names of ten people for the antitrust division.' Then it would be our job to go to Talent Inventory and get them. After reading the analyses, the A.G.-designate will probably be looking for specific kinds of people, because of the issues." Levin turns in at the driveway of the Justice Department, is waved on by a guard, and starts looking for his assigned parking place in the courtyard. "One of my problems is that any substantive work is extremely time-consuming, and there are so many other things to do at the same time. I never knew so many people were interested in the Justice Department. We get an incredible number of calls, and we really need to listen to them. The response we're getting is indicative of optimism, I think, about new directions in the Justice Department."

Before joining Carter, Levin was legal director and general counsel of the Southern Poverty Law Center, in Montgomery, Alabama. "My main contact with the department was with the civil-rights and civil divisions. I've sued a lot of federal agencies." He laughs. His assigned parking space—No. 27—is empty, so he parks, gets out, and locks his car. He strides across the courtyard. "It's going to make a substantial difference to have had this transition process go before," he says. "It wasn't undertaken lightly. It was a risky political move for Governor Carter, allocating the money for it, and it subjected him to charges of presumptuousness. But I think he'll certainly be judged as a farsighted person, and maybe it will become traditional." Levin enters the building and walks down a long, broad hall. "I've been enthusiastic about Carter for several years. I remember hearing a speech he made on the environment. It was very strong, and it was very unpopular with the audience. It was a beautiful speech, and Hamilton Jordan told me later that Carter had written it on the way to the event—no strike-throughs, just laid it out." Smiling, Levin adds, "I have a lot of chauvinistic attitude, too, about Southerners running for office." He goes into a suite of offices—orange and peach—on the ground floor, and is greeted by a Justice Department secre-

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tary. "Do I have any phone calls?" asks Levin. "You certainly do!" she replies, handing him a stack of messages.

12:30 P.M.: THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

A VISITOR in the grip of transitionitis—a swine-flu variant that causes sudden fatigue, hot flashes, and words like "outreach" and "overview" to ring in the ears—lurches off the Mall and up the steps, and takes asylum in the dim corridors of the museum. He is hoping not to see another briefcase for at least an hour, and he shuffles around happily among the silent stuffed animals. An enormous blue whale hangs aslant in a dark hall—radiating solemnity, mystery. The design is superb, and it is obvious that this astonishing creature clearly identified the key issue: seek out opportunities to get a hell of a lot to eat. A band of portly penguins stand about in a large display case, their long toes planted on simulated snow. They gaze in various directions, thoughtfully, their beaks elevated. They appear to have been caught in the policy-planning stage. These creatures are the epitome of transition, being birds that swim. The emperor penguin—the top of the line—stands about four feet high, and lives in the water off Antarctica: a poor choice, one might think. The only time he comes ashore is when he has a strong desire for new faces. Females also turn up with the same basic goal. They conduct a mutual talent-inventory search on the ice, and—with a show of unity, coöperation, and good will—reproduce. The female presents the male with a single egg, which he holds on his feet and stuffs into a warm fold over his stomach. The result—within a time frame of nine weeks—is one more emperor penguin, and after a while they all go out and swim around the icebergs again.

2:30 P.M.: FIFTH FLOOR OF H.E.W. (NORTH)

TWO young men in shirtsleeves are walking down the hall.

FIRST YOUNG MAN: How much information do you *want*?

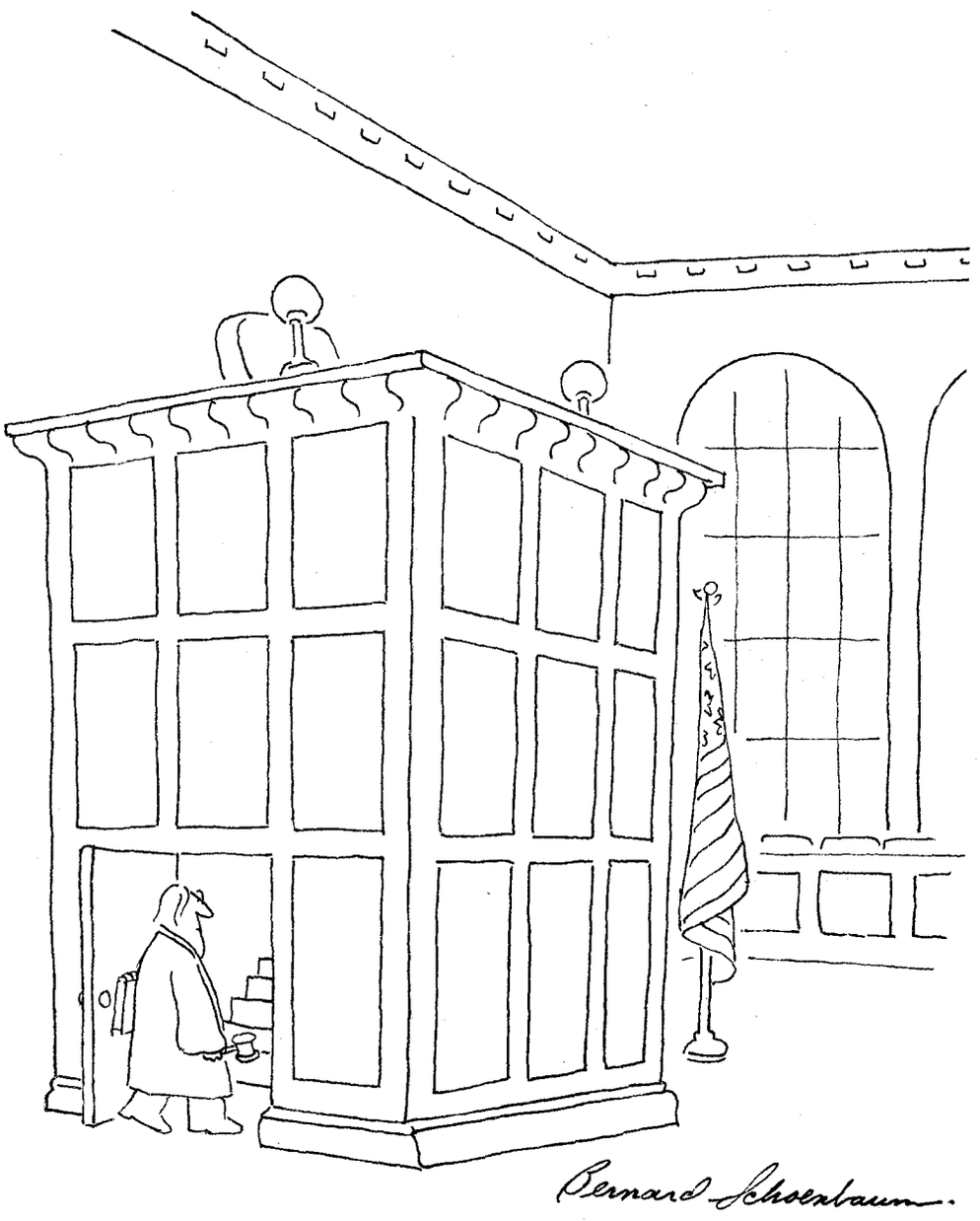
SECOND YOUNG MAN: I'd like an intelligent, descriptive paragraph on each—with legislative options and that stuff.

The first young man nods.

In an office off a caterpillar-green corridor, Joseph Duffey—a benign-looking, relaxed middle-aged man who once ran for senator in Connecticut (defeated by Lowell Weicker)—is working for Hamilton Jordan's personnel-advisory group. "Names are coming in from everywhere," he says. "Some people have even hired public-relations men to promote them. It's an awkward period for human beings." He smiles. "We all find it difficult to bear our ambitions gracefully." Duffey is concentrating on Health, Education, and Welfare. "Over the weekend, I read every proposal for reorganization of H.E.W.; there are about a dozen bills on this in Congress now. I'm trying to get a grip on what the goals should be, and how they relate to personnel. H.E.W. is tremendous: the payout is something like five hundred million dollars a day. It has what are called 'uncontrollable expenditures,' such as built-in public assistance and social security. It's efficiently managed, but we could probably do better. Morale is at a low ebb. The Secretary and Under Secretary should relate to a number of hard-working people who chose to work in this agency and have been rather demoralized. It's our job to bring the personnel-search process to a head—at least, to where it's of some use to the President-elect. We have a real desire to get new faces. There's a broad pool of prospects, but finally it narrows. It's a kind of ferment. Certain names begin to appear—people you hadn't thought about. Someone says, 'There's a thirty-eight-year-old black man in Kansas City who works in welfare . . .' You check somebody who's observed a man, then track in from different sides, and you discover things about the integrity of his work, his ability to resolve conflict, his skill at coalition-building. Reputations are strange things. You keep checking. You try to get a bead on him, find out what the negatives are. Slowly, a picture emerges."

4:30 P.M.

JOSEPH MITCHELL is a tidy man with an even gaze, the serene voice of a peacemaker. For several years, he and his boss on the transition team, Frank Moore, served as liaison between Governor Carter and the Georgia General Assembly. Now they are doing



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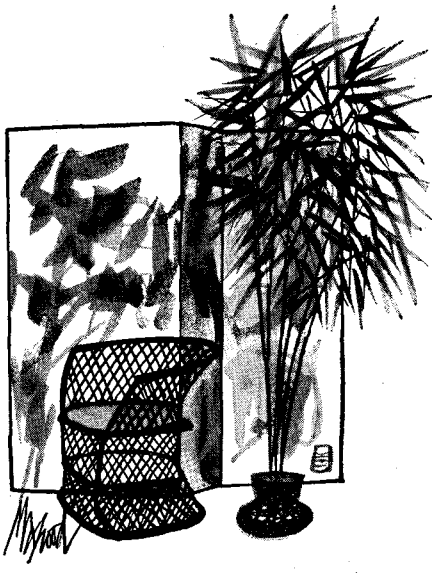
the same chore for Carter with the United States Congress. "People who are in this job have been described as 'the President's lobbyists,' and they certainly are," says Mitchell. "But they also have an ombudsman function for the members of Congress. They promote the President's programs, and act as a link and feedback between the Hill and the White House. Right now, members of Congress are recommending candidates for jobs; they want information on who to contact, and how to get appointments. But soon this will change, and they'll be concerned mostly with legislation. Over the last eight years, there's been a drift, a lack of direction from the executive. President Ford probably spent a lot of time, as a minority-party President, trying to stop congressional initiatives when he thought they were not in the best interests of the Administration. Because of this relationship, and other things, Congress has become the initiator, and taken the leadership. Their staff has grown. They're much more independent. They're no longer waiting for a President to propose. But Jimmy Carter is a very strong executive. In Georgia, he was always involved with members of the assembly. His tendency is going to be to want to work with Congress. The relationship now will be a very positive one. Initially, at least, Congress will be delighted with having a majority President. It's been congenial so far. I think they've found Carter very open, intelligent, aggressive. He has found them most cordial and willing to listen. That's all we know at this point. We're fortunate to have Senator Mondale—his knowledge is very valuable to a governor who has never dealt with a very large legislative body. Our permanent staff will probably be—incidentally, Moore and I are transition only; we're not guaranteed these jobs—one man who is assistant to the President for congressional relations, with one or two assistants for the Senate and three or four for the House. Maybe sixteen or seventeen people, including clerical. They'll be establishing personal relationships with the members, advising the President on possible acceptance or rejection of legislation, and keeping the members informed. It's a very personal kind of job. It's critical for the liaison man to be scrupulously honest—not a con man or a P. R. guy. The membership must perceive him to be close to and representing the President. He must be a man of his word. Each member of Congress is a very important individual to his own section of the country; it's their turf. They want to feel there is understanding and communication between them and a President who doesn't come from their turf. There's a heck of a lot of things the White House can help a congressman on, but we'd be doing the wrong job if we just did favors for Congress. Next week, Governor Carter will meet with various members of Congress he hasn't met before, and he hopes to have met all of them before the Inauguration. We've been operational since the nomination. We receive hundreds of phone calls a day. A lot of people gravitate to power."

7:30 P.M.: The Kennedy Center

A fashionable crowd is seated in the American Film Institute's auditorium, for the Washington première of a family-type film about the life of Sarah Bernhardt. It is a *Reader's Digest* presentation. A bald, genial man stands up and gives a brief speech of welcome. He is pleasant and gracious. It is Melvin Laird, who was Nixon's Secretary of Defense during the Vietnam war; he is now employed by the *Reader's Digest*. The movie is selective with the facts of Bernhardt's life. It is rated PG, and it overlooks the fact that one of her legs was amputated, and that she continued to perform onstage in specially designed roles. It is an evening of polite silences, it seems. Bernhardt has both her legs; the boss of the Pentagon has become the Man From Pleasantville. Some transitions are more difficult to absorb than others.

December 1, 1 A.M.: A Restaurant

THERE has been a rumor that Jack Watson will resign in three days. A young man who has long been close to Carter and to the campaign sits in a dark restaurant—disco music thumps in an adjacent room—and says that he feels this was probably foreordained, that it was a job nobody, not even Watson, could do without ultimately coming into conflict with the "political" people, the campaign people: Hamilton Jordan. It was a mistake, the young man says, to set up transition planning as a totally independent activity, physically removed from the campaign itself. It operated in a kind of vacuum while the campaign struggled on outside; when the campaign veterans stepped off the field victorious, they felt they should then take a major role in the staffing and policy of the new Administration—not only as their due but because of the knowledge they had acquired during the campaign. The transition-planning office should have been at campaign headquarters from the start, he says. He regrets the conflict. He has great respect for both Watson and Jordan; they are extremely intelligent and capable men. It will be a poor start for the new Administration if this rift is not healed. In other respects, he has considerable optimism. He thinks Carter has the potential to become a great President. He has seen Carter frequently and close up, in a variety of situations, good and bad. There is in Carter the obvious quick intelligence and management skills, the ambition and drive, the political instincts; but beyond these—and much more significant, the young man feels—are Carter's curiosity and his ability to change. Carter is receptive to ideas—he likes to hear opposing positions, the "outside" view. The President-elect reads constantly. Carter may be able to respond creatively and affirmatively to new situations, the young man thinks. Carter is noted for a persistent failure to display gratitude to his aides, but the young man says that he makes it clear in other ways how valuable he considers them; loyalty is a strong point. Carter is authentically devoted to his home place, his family, his church; the feelings are deep. Repeatedly, during the campaign, Carter added long hours of travel to his schedule in order to return home for even a brief period. He recalls Carter's response to the well-publicized efforts of the Reverend Clennon King to gain membership in the Plains Baptist church: Carter's immediate reaction was concern about the church itself rather than about the explosive impact, through the press, on the last days of his campaign.



9:30 A.M.: The Old Senate Office Building

"Jack Watson was here a couple of days ago," says an aide in the crowded office of a powerful Demo-

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"Maybe he's here and maybe he isn't. Does he have an antenna on top of his head?"

• •

cratic senator. "He stayed about ninety minutes. Last week, Carter had offered his coöperation to the senators, so the senator invited Watson over. He was very helpful. The senator was able to get some of his interests expressed, and I gather Watson invited contributions on names, among other things. We were impressed with him."

Noon: The Smithsonian Institution Building

CLIMBING a dizzying circular staircase in this marvellous and daffy building, a visitor finally reaches a lofty office with a huge rose window, and, peering out through one of the lower petals, obtains a splendid view of the Mall. There is openness and grace; the majestic, self-important buildings have plenty of room around them for unimportant people who want to sit under a tree. The ratio of monumentality and humanity seems just about right: a democratic balance. Going back down the stairs, the visitor finds on the main floor a display of models and drawings called "The Federal City: Plans and Realities." They show some of the plans that have been made, over the years, for the design or redesign of Washington, from Pierre Charles L'Enfant to Nathaniel Owings. Among the schemes have been the creation of sunken gardens just west of the Washington Monument, the addition of a second giant obelisk to match the Monument, and the removal of the Smithsonian buildings from view. None of these have been carried out, of course, and the visitor—stepping out into the Mall once more, into a city on the verge of bold new concepts and large-scale proposals—is forced to reflect that someday, years from now, we may be grateful for the plan that fails, the dream that goes down the drain.

3:30 p.m.: The White House

THE White House is in the eye of the beholder. In a matter of weeks, it will probably appear to gleam and sparkle like a birthday cake, but today, as a visitor walks down the long driveway to the West Wing, it seems wintry white, withdrawn—a bleached sarcophagus. Inside the warm, cheerful office of Ron Nessen, however, there is a crackling fire in the fireplace, and an air of serene acceptance. Nessen leans back in his chair, his feet up on his semicircular desk. The walls are covered with pictures and editorial cartoons; there are books and flowers, and three TV sets. "When I was a correspondent for NBC and started covering the White House, in '64, the briefings were held in the press secretary's office," he says. "There was a good kind of relaxed atmosphere. Today, they've become a more adversary proceeding. The press secretary stands on a podium. We get out there and we play with words. It turns into a word game. Jody Powell has the same sarcastic sense of humor I have, and it will probably get him into just as much trouble as it has me." Nessen mentions Powell's visit to the White House, and describes his own tangle with the press on that occasion. "When I said to a reporter, 'Hey, this isn't fair. This is my private office,' and he replied, 'Go away. This isn't your office, it's the taxpayers' office'—well, I said something to him I'd intended to say a little *later* in my term." Nessen quotes the suggestion he made at the time, and he beams. "I introduced Jody Powell to all the people here, gave him a tour, and drew him a rough organizational chart on a yellow pad. Some of the people talked to him at length. One talked to him about the role of departmental public-affairs officers. He seemed to absorb information at a great rate. He was curious about other parts of the White House that he thought might fall under his jurisdiction logically, such as speechwriting, advance, and the photo office. They're not currently under us, but, you know, I think he's probably on the right track with that kind of view of organization, given the fact that he has a close relationship with Carter. It makes sense to put all the elements of White House communications under one man. He did indicate that he was interested in continuing the daily briefing, and doing it himself. I see that as a possible problem.

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've worked fourteen to sixteen hours day and I could hardly keep up. It vill be quite a chore. I've urged Powell o step back and think about it, not imply inherit what we've done. Is the aily briefing really worthwhile in erms of time, and does it pass useful ıformation to people?"

Nessen gets up and puts another log n the fire, then returns to his desk. "I ume into this job six weeks after the 'ord Administration started. I jumped ıto the driver's seat of a machine that 'as already racing along. I inherited ıgoing procedures and ways of doing ıings. I came in twelve days after the ırdon. There was a hangover effect 'om Watergate and Ziegler: distrust, ostility, cynicism, disbelief. The White ouse was in a peculiar phase. Al Haig as in his last week. He had started to t go the reins, but Rumsfeld had not t come in. It was a really odd pe-)d. 'Anarchy' is too strong a word, ıt there was no single strong person the staff level. I also stepped into situation where a lot of Nixon ıff were still here—like Ken Clawn and Father McLaughlin, both dent defenders of Nixon. So there ere many questions at each press con-ence about these carry-over peo-. I also inherited a group of White ouse reporters who were very frusıted because they had never even got smell of Watergate. Woodward and rnstein were totally outside the hite House. Watergate had gone on ht under the noses of these White ouse reporters and they had never t near it. So they were determined t to let it ever happen again. They ame investigative reporters at the efings. Then, there was another oblem, which was that I had never naged anything bigger than a film w. I knew how to jump on a plane the middle of the night, and rent a ', and I was enterprising, but I inited an organization of sixty-five ople. I had to learn something about ninistration as well as where you nt to get information, how to give riefing, and so on.

"I think Ford has gone a long way repairing damage between the Presiıt and the press. I think he might e done better with a better press retary. I don't think I have the right ıperament; I'm sarcastic and I have hort temper. But he's done a lot. 's had an incredible number of etings with the press, in every conıable format. I've never gone to ı without him saying, 'O.K. Let's it.' A President had never gone 'Meet the Press' before; followup stions at his press conference were

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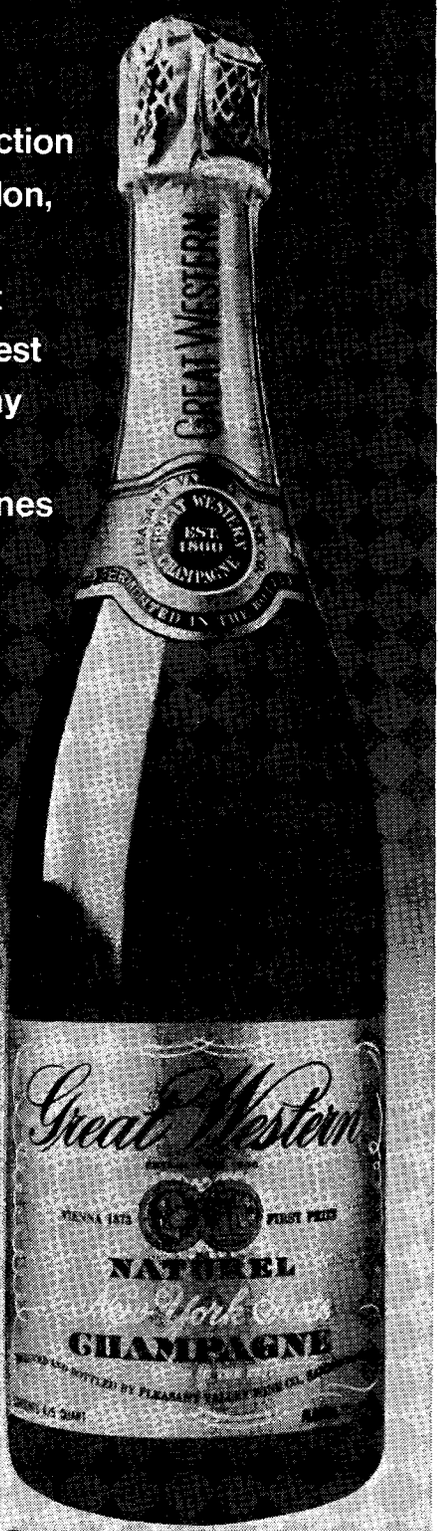

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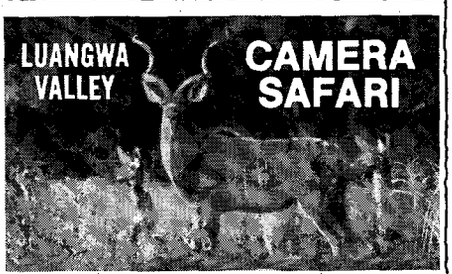

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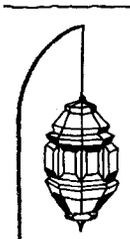

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new, too. He's been in Washington a long time. He knows a lot of reporters. He likes them. He understands them. He's been in their homes. They've come to his.

"I promised myself not to complain about the news coverage of the campaign; it would be dismissed as sour grapes. But there's been a fairly large outpouring of criticism in various journals, so I thought I ought to speak my mind, too. There was a book called 'The Unseeing Eye,' which was an analysis of the 1972 election coverage by TV. They took surveys and discovered that the majority of people got more information about candidates' stands on issues from paid commercials than from the evening news. I think the same was true in 1976. The one innovation we tried in this election was paid TV commercials with the President and Joe Garagiola. There was a tremendous ribbing in the press about this—Garagiola throwing softballs to the President—but it's my gut feeling that more people learned more about the President's positions from this than from all the news shows. Carter may feel the same way about his own paid commercials. Now, that is a terrible indictment of TV news—that in order to get your views on issues across, you have to buy time. There is something desperately wrong if that is the case. I think there's got to be a fundamental change in the outlook of the networks. It's the same old thing of concentration on trivia. One day, during the campaign, the President was going to make a speech at Villanova. He had something to say about the future, and it was a hell of a good speech. On the way, the motorcade passed under a viaduct. The cars got through, but there had been a mistake in the advancing, and the press buses got stuck under the viaduct. The reporters had to walk a few blocks to the speech. I saw the camera crews filming this, and I thought, They can't be using *this* as a story! But that night they did. Not a word about the speech. Another time, the President was making a farm speech at Iowa State, and he said, 'I'm glad to be here at Ohio State.' I said, 'I bet every single network will use that tonight.' Well, two networks did, and the third had no story at all. But they told me that's what they would have used if they *had* used a story. John Chancellor makes a speech saying his rights were violated because there was no serious discussion of the issues in the campaign—but his own show runs trivia.

"I've had mixed feelings about the election. Why did it happen? Everybody here has searched back again and again, and asked, 'Was it anything I did?' Now we're in a period of tremendous deceleration. Any job in the White House is tough, physically. You come in at seven in the morning, stay late at night. The phone is always ringing, lots of mail, stuff to read. There's a lot of firefighting and damage-control stuff." Nessen laughs. "Then, suddenly, you're going ten miles an hour, after doing terribly important things at a hundred. It takes an adjustment. Nobody on this staff has been out to lunch in nine months, so I took some of them out a couple of days ago. We all talked about what we'd do when this is over. I said I'd fix my motorcycle, and play with my kids again. Then we all walked slowly back. I recently went shopping with my wife. It was the first time in two years." Nessen looks around his office. "We'll start packing up at the beginning of January. My secretary is finding out what we're supposed to take and what we're supposed to leave. The White House has these cardboard boxes. I get a bunch of those, and I'll stuff my books and pictures in there."

Nessen is silent. Then he stands up. "The White House is a great testing place for people. It really is the big leagues. You see how you perform under tremendous pressure. You see what people think of you, what they write about you. You say, 'Hey, that's not me . . . or *is* it?' I will not forget being forced to look at myself in a very honest way."

9 P.M.: A Restaurant in Georgetown

TWO women—very close, the friendship going back to the early Kennedy days—are talking at a party in a popular restaurant. One of them worked for Carter throughout the campaign and now holds a significant position on the transition team. The other regards Carter with aversion and deep mistrust. They talk of books and movies, sports, friends; there is lots of laughter. The one subject they never mention is Jimmy Carter.

December 2: Aboard a Washington-to-New York Metroliner

RUMBLING and racketing up the Eastern corridor, past broad frozen fields and the low, encroaching corrugated shanties of light industry, past the bleak backsides of Baltimore, Wilmington, Philadelphia, Trenton one finds that the transition recedes. The basic roles, the major goals, the i

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puts, feedbacks, linkages, the substantive this and substantive that—the forceful patois of hip bureaucracy becomes a mumble. Looking out the window of the racing train, one wonders what effect all the issue identifications, the personnel selections, the policy formulations will have on this flickering, silent-movie landscape. Will that giant factory get bigger? Will that back alley get cleaner? The river we are rattling over—will it ever be suitable for fish? Will that old woman tottering down that sidewalk with her shopping bag find welcome someplace—dignity, rest, a doctor who gives a damn? Will those encrusted tenements be replaced? If so, by what? Those brooding teen-age loungers in the shadow of a storefront—will there be jobs for them, or jail?

In Washington, a new foot is in the door; we have yet to see the face clearly. Through an election process that inevitably involves power politics, big promises, image-building, quiet deals, distortion of issues, evasions, and bluff, we expect to obtain a President who will perform honorably and openly in the service of our country. Democracy is an odd, farfetched conceit. And yet, in a clumsy way, it works. When this transition is complete and the new administration is in place, the democratic system will narrow down, as it usually does, to human beings. When the data bank has spat its last and the final guidelines are drawn, it will be circumstance versus character, the same old story. A person—even a President—will respond or fail to respond, and matters will be resolved by wisdom or the lack of it, by strength or flaccidity, by the instinct for compassion or the reflex of indifference. We'll see.

—James Stevenson

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—*The Times.*

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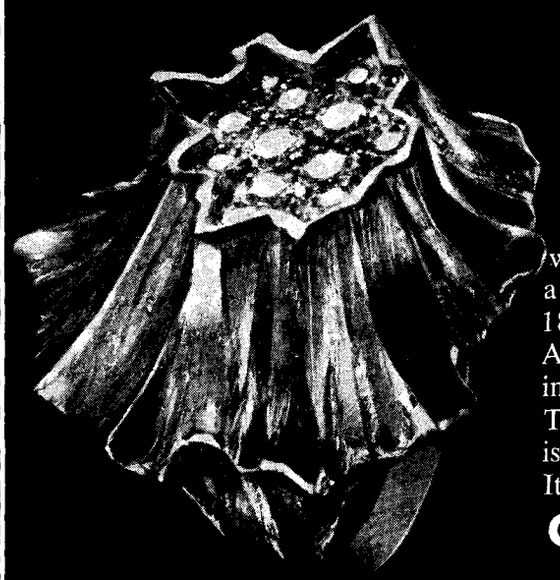

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THE TRIUMPH OF AVARICE

"Sly Fox," at the Broadhurst, is billed as an adaptation of Ben Jonson's "Volpone," but it is welcomely much more than that. The adapter, Larry Gelbart, is temperamentally closer to the Marx Brothers than he is to Jonson; his dialogue has the nervous quickness of early Groucho, with Groucho's unpredictable free-associational asides and his bent for the reasonable-outrageous: "I wish to prefer charges." "Very well—which charges do you prefer?" Gelbart has caused the classical shapeliness of Jonson's plot to explode into harum-scarum twentieth-century show biz; anything goes. The stage becomes a minefield of gags, visual and oral, which detonate continuously and without warning. One is helpless not to laugh in the presence of so much sheer energy of tomfoolery, embodied by some of the most gifted of our contemporary clowns. The voluptuous keeper of a brothel visits a nonagenarian miser in his hovel, with the optimistic intention of seducing him. She is about to sit down when she catches sight of something on the floor nearby. She screams. "Is that a dead cat?" she asks in horror. The miser does not deny it; with a mild querulousness, he says, "Do you know what it costs to *feed* a cat nowadays?" The reply is not uproarious in print; it is uproarious when Jack Gilford utters it.

In the Gelbart version, Jonson's villainous hero, Volpone, has had his name Englished into Foxwell J. Sly, and the city he infests and plunders is not Venice but San Francisco; the period is after the Civil War and before the earthquake, and George Jenkins has designed settings for Sly's malefactions that are superlatively rich and vulgar, and would make Jim Flood of Nob Hill groan with envy. Sly's base of operations is a vast bed, in the sheeted depths of which he pretends to be dying. To his bedchamber come an assortment of scoundrels as riddled with cupidity as he but far less clever than he; one by one, each of them is duped into supposing that he will be Sly's heir. Sly comes not to an edifyingly miserable end but, by his standards, to a happy one: having mastered the art of turning men's avarice against them, he sets off, heavy with gold, on who knows what fresh fiscal misdemeanors. The moral of the play is, or appears to be, that money can buy anything, including more money.

Sly is played with riproaring relish by George C. Scott, who, for good measure, also plays a hanging judge in a courtroom scene every single line of which is immaculately nonsensical and hilarious. (The chief of the San Francisco police turns out to be a compulsive flasher. The judge, having threatened to throw the book at a certain culprit, picks up the book and throws it at him. It is that kind of show.) I've already singled out Jack Gilford; among his companions in folly are Bob Dishy, Gretchen Wyler, Hector Elizondo, John Ramsey, James Gallery, John Heffernan, and Trish Van Devere. The costumes are by Albert Wolsky, the lighting is by Mr. Jenkins, and the direction is by Arthur Penn, who knows a thing or two about velocity as a function of farce.

Tennessee Williams' "The Night of the Iguana" is being given a respectful revival at the Circle in the Square. The production is satisfactory, if not exhilarating. The most striking thing about it is the setting by H. R. Poindexter. For once, the problem posed by the long and comparatively narrow space of the Circle in the Square (which it would be more accurate to call the Horseshoe in the Rectangle) has been cunningly resolved; the action of the play takes place with seeming naturalness over the entire stage area, and we half believe that the sand scattered at our feet does indeed lead down to the Pacific. Richard Chamberlain has the role of the minister turned travel guide; his task is to convey to us that, like so many other Williams characters, he is a person at the very end of his tether—one who, in Frost's words, has "nothing to look backward to with pride, and nothing to look forward to with hope." Chamberlain, in his vigorous youth and good looks, cannot portray the commingling of physical and spiritual ruin that Richard Burton conveyed in the movie version of the play; still, he is admirably anguished over the sexual demands made upon him by women young and old, and he carries off the climactic scene convincingly. Sylvia Miles plays the slatternly mistress of a ramshackle hotel on the west coast of Mexico; she plays the part broadly and yet effectively. Dorothy McGuire as an aging spinster artist seemed to me to move uneasily in and out of her role; perhaps by now, a dozen performances later, she is more comfortably at home in it. William Roerick is superb as her grandfather, a ninety-seven-year-old poet. Is there anywhere in America an actor of any age who doesn't long to play a ninety-seven-year-old poet, especially if he has a wheelchair to fiddle with?

"The Night of the Iguana" is a garrulous and often touching play. I listened to every word of it with pleasure, and with a sense that we have yet to place a sufficiently high value upon all of Williams' work. Nobody can equal him at flinging a play into motion within the first five minutes; nobody can equal him at slowing a scene down and making us aware, by a handful of softly spoken words, of the sad arduousness of remaining alive. Mr. Poindexter has done the lighting of "The Night of the Iguana" as well as its setting; the costumes are by Noel Taylor, and the direction is by Joseph Hardy. He has served Williams well.

—Brendan Gill

OFF BROADWAY

Looking for a Phoenix

David Rudkin's "Ashes," a British import at the Manhattan Theatre Club, is a play about the hard luck of an extremely bright and attractive young couple named Colin and Anne with an undertone of sadness that is not uncommon in British imports these days. Most of the first part of the evening is given over to the couple's unsuccessful efforts to conceive a child, to her visits to a gynecologist and his to a semenologist, and to the visits of both of them to various other specialists—all done in scenes that are close to blackouts, with a curtain whisking back and forth across the stage to become a screen in front of one examining table after another, or a scrim for the shadow play of their experiments in bed, or just punctuation to mark the end of one colloquy and the beginning of another. The couple's discouragement is expressed for the most part in wry, brave jokes—the kind of wit that may remind you of "A Day in the Death of

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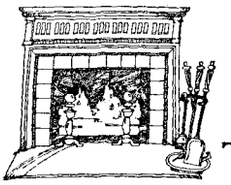
Joe Egg." Eventually, they do conceive, but the pregnancy is messy and difficult, very uncertain right from the start, and eventually she loses the child and, along with it, any chance to conceive again. Both Colin and Anne, we learn, have given up unsuccessful careers—she as an actress, he as a writer—to become parents. Now they must try to become adoptive parents, and are subjected to lectures from social workers and to more prying, humiliating interviews. At the end, there is a letter from the county: they have been turned down; no adoption, and no reason given. Now what? And yet one feels that there will be something—that Colin and Anne are unsinkable, endlessly resourceful, endlessly courageous. They will rise from the ashes.

Persistence and defeat, with their social or political implications, make a depressing theme, but "Ashes," for all its poignancy, is not depressing. There is always something exhilarating about good work on a stage. Mr. Rudkin is a fine writer, who knows what he is doing every minute of the time; his characters are worth caring about, and the lines they speak are worth hearing. There is a sexual frankness, both visual and verbal, about the play which probably would have been impossible fifteen or twenty years ago, and the tendency of the players to step outside the action from time to time to address the audience directly owes something to Brecht. Yet the reasons for the play's success—heartening to those of us who cherish continuity in the theatre—are traditional: well-drawn, complex characters, and the invaluable irony and comedy that are integral to the best of British drama. The performance, under Lynne Meadow's direction, does honor to the Manhattan Theatre Club, of which she is the artistic director, and to Off Off Broadway in general. Brian Murray, a first-rate actor, and Roberta Maxwell, who gets better with every role, play Colin and Anne to perfection, and John Tillinger plays any number of specialists and social workers, and one particular ambulance driver, with the skill and authority that we have come to expect from him. Penelope Allen (new to me) does very well as an assortment of nurses and technicians, and as one particular bitchy caller when Anne is in extremis. Setting by John Lee Beatty, costumes by Jennifer Von Mayrhauser, lighting by Dennis Parichy—all commendable. The show, a co-production of the M.T.C. and the New York Shakespeare Festival, will run through January 2nd.

—Edith Oliver



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AROUND CITY HALL

FAST FRIENDS

EARLIER this month, as Hugh Carey prepared to vote with the other members of the Electoral College to make Jimmy Carter's victory official, Mario Cuomo, the Secretary of State in Albany, announced that it was the first time in history that a New York governor had served as a national elector. Cuomo concluded that in the past the state's governors had been treated as if they were ineligible for the post, since they were so often prominent candidates for their party's nomination for President or, at the least, Vice-President. The year 1976 was, of course, an election year when New York politicians of both parties were essentially out of it. The only local political figure who at one time seemed fairly certain of a place on either national ticket was the Vice-Presidential incumbent and former New York governor, Nelson Rockefeller, but, with the reported encouragement of Gerald Ford, he took himself out of the running for this year's Vice-Presidential nomination in November of 1975 to ease Ford's relations with anti-Rockefeller Republicans in the South—an area that the President lost last month anyhow.

No other New York State politicians were seriously considered for the nominations of either party after this city's disasters became a headlined national story during the fall of 1975; the story's coast-to-coast impact was heightened by Ford's decision to take advantage of the rest of the nation's traditional hostility toward New York and make the city's improvidence and presumptuousness in looking to Washington for assistance the subject of an early and intemperate campaign philippic. Eventually, the President did agree to a loan program, and it was because of the city's role as the federal government's most celebrated debtor that it was of critical importance for political leaders here—and also in Albany, since the state government's fiscal stability was badly shaken as a result of the city's problems—to establish themselves as having played a significant role in the election of the man to be sworn in on January 20th. On the whole, they managed this remarkably well, especially considering that until the last few weeks of the long primary season Carter made no secret of the fact that he regarded most New York politicians as mortal enemies. The ebullience that overtook City Hall in the first few hours after the Carter victory—a grinning Mayor Beame posed for television cameras twice while tearing up a replica of the famous *Daily News* headline "Ford to City: Drop Dead"—was perhaps excessive in view of the cautious and unspecific nature of the promises of help for New York that had accompanied Carter's later assurances of friendship.

Still, after last year's Presidential flailing, a declared friend in the White House was bound to be seen as an improvement, and the city's voters had the satisfaction of knowing that local resentment of Ford's year-earlier attack (along with the ingrained local habit of voting Democratic, all else being equal) had had much to do with Ford's loss of the state's forty-one electoral votes and thus, presumably, his loss in the Electoral College, where Carter's margin over the two hundred and seventy required for victory was only twenty-seven. The Democratic candidate's plurality of 288,767 in the state was assured by the vote in the city, where Carter's margin was 716,717. If the Democratic margin in the five boroughs had been only eighty-one thousand votes, as it was in 1972, the roles of winner and loser in the state would have been reversed this year. Ford's 1975 "rhetoric," Senator James Buckley said recently, "undoubtedly cost him New York State," and, along with the Senator's own onetime prescription of bankruptcy as a wholesome experience for the city, he felt, also helped bring about Buckley's defeat by the Democratic senatorial candidate, Daniel Patrick Moynihan. Buckley's problem had been, he commented ruefully, that he had got "wrapped into that *Daily News* headline." To the formal complaint of Ford's campaign committee to the *News* management, a week before the election, that in his 1975 speech the President had not told the city in so many words to drop dead (a complaint that the White House had not entered immediately after the headline appeared, when savaging the city was regarded, briefly, as a political plus for Ford), the paper responded, "While the *News* recognizes that the President did not use the words 'drop dead' in his speech dealing with aid to New York City, it considers them a fair and accurate headline summation of the tenor of his remarks." There is a sense here that if after Ford's 1975 remarks the state's electoral votes had gone to the President last month, it would have been fair for historians to interpret this as the same kind of proof of voters' poor memories and weakness for the familiar that the nationwide endorsement at the ballot box of the man who pardoned Richard Nixon would have been judged to be after the travail of Watergate.

If Ford *had* won New York and the Electoral College vote, he would have been deeply indebted to the state's Republican leaders, most of whom had been urging him to be openly sympathetic toward the city's problems, but there was no certainty that Ford's gratitude would mean money in the bank—or, in fact, that his gratitude could be counted on at all. The President had been deeply indebted to those same state leaders—particularly Vice-President Rockefeller, still the panjandrum of Republican politics in the state—who at the Kansas City Convention delivered to Ford the votes of a hundred and thirty-three of New York's hundred and fifty-four delegates, without which Ford could not have won the nomination from Ronald Reagan. Yet, as Clayton Fritchey wrote in his syndicated column late in August, "seldom has any nominee owed so much to one man as Ford owes Rockefeller, and seldom has the good soldier been so poorly rewarded." The columnist noted that Rockefeller had "been able to save the President's neck not once but several times," and marvelled at Ford's apparent lack of comprehension of the magnanimity of the Vice-President's gesture in relinquishing the huge bloc of votes and the bargaining position that, as Fritchey put it, "might have gained him almost anything he wanted"—but then all that Rockefeller wanted was the Presidential nomination for himself, and by that time the nomination was not negotiable. After the delivery of New York's crucial votes in Kansas City, the state Republican chairman, Richard Rosenbaum, predicted that in the two months before the election the President's actions would be such that "New York will feel compatible" with his candidacy, but clearly the goal was not reached. As for Rockefeller, when Ford toured Brooklyn in mid-October he was not invited to come along. When the Brooklyn Republican county chairman, George Clark, who had been the leader of the local Reagan forces and a longtime adversary of the former New York governor, was left out, he put some of the blame on "Fingerman"—Rockefeller, that is—until he learned, to his astonishment, that the Vice-President had also been among the uninvited. "They didn't tell you,

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and they didn't tell me." Rockefeller assured him.

The term "Fingerman" was, of course, a reference to Rockefeller's obscene middle-finger exercise in response to the heckling by students from the State University at Binghamton—a gesture that undoubtedly aroused some envy among active candidates laboring under the obligation of appearing statesmanlike under all crowd conditions and not risking the alienation of a single possible supporter. The finger movement came during a session in which Rockefeller declared that the students were there only "because the Republican Party built the university"—apparently without help from any of the state's Democratic taxpayers—and listened with no sign of objection as former Governor Malcolm Wilson, his successor in Albany, greeted the students as "future inmates of Attica." Like Rockefeller, Wilson is not expected to run for public office again. He has, however, left his mark on Republican rhetoric. In the 1974 campaign to retain the governorship (he was defeated by Hugh Carey), Wilson said of New York's welfare problem that he favored taking care of "the needy but not the greedy." At the height of last year's local fiscal crisis, Secretary of the Treasury William Simon said he had sympathy for New York's "needy but not greedy." And during this year's Presidential campaign Gerald Ford also endorsed help for the needy ("but not the greedy"). Rockefeller's gesture at Binghamton was a reminder of the huge delight he took in an incident at the Kansas City Convention, when his snatching of a Reagan sign from a Reagan delegate caused another Reagan delegate to rip out the New York delegation's floor phone. "You might as well have some fun in this business," he said after the Binghamton episode. Although the members of the Rockefeller staff have a number of solemn suggestions when they are asked what they think Rockefeller will do in the coming years ("I wouldn't be surprised if he took on world hunger," one of them said), it was clear to many New Yorkers that having their former governor back home may turn out not to be an entirely restful experience.

"Do you think your thing about the human race might be over by the nineteenth?"

• •

New York is now firmly established to its own satisfaction—and, it hopes, to the satisfaction of the President-elect—as the state that carried Carter to victory, although in fact any combination of state votes adding up to at least twenty-seven, such as those of Ohio and Hawaii, could also be pointed to as having provided his narrow Electoral College margin. The impression that New York's votes made all the difference would probably not have gained such currency if it had not been for a circumstance that prevented some of the local returns from coming in during the early post-election hours along with the totals from other states in the East and the Midwest. Although the polls closed in New York at 9 P.M., a large number of precincts were slow to report, and Carter's lead in the state, as recorded on the television screens, was often less than one percentage point. It was some time before the various anchormen, trying not to seem astonished by the figures, caught on to the fact that most of the outstanding returns were not from upstate Republican districts but from heavily Democratic New York City. The reason for this was that the city's Police Department, its forces depleted as a result of the fiscal crisis, had had trouble rounding up the several hundred officers needed to ride shotgun on trucks carrying the machines to the election center, so the reporting process was delayed. Whether or not Republican State Chairman Rosenbaum knew this, he contributed to the impression that New York's votes were the critical ones by announcing at about 2 A.M. that, since the vote in the state was so close, he was calling for a police guard on all the city's voting machines (which were already under police guard) in preparation for an investigation of possible voting fraud. If Carter was going to win, the Republican state leader may not have been averse to encouraging the theory that the Democrat's victory might be tainted by dirty work in this famously iniquitous city. Ultimately, the results in the state turned out not to be particularly close—fifty-one per cent for Carter to forty-seven per cent for Ford (and four per cent was a larger margin than the President held in many of the states he won)—and the day after the election Rosenbaum withdrew his call for an investigation.

In recent months, during exchanges of almost daily vows of devotion to each other's interests, it was understandable that Carter and his staff, on one side, and local Democratic politicians, on the other, were not eager to be reminded of the early months of this year, when their relationship was one of daily insults. Among most New York Democratic leaders, Carter was then not at the very bottom of their scale of Presidential candidates only because for a time Alabama's Governor George Wallace was also in the race, and their systematic efforts to keep Carter's name off the state primary ballot and to hamper his effort here in

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other ways led the former Georgia governor to denounce New York as "a horrible example of gross political bossism." Although Carter was finally given a place on the ballot, he came out of the April 6th primary a poor fourth, taking only 12.8 per cent of the vote—after Senator Henry Jackson (38 per cent), Representative Morris Udall (25.5 per cent), and an officially uncommitted slate leaning toward Senator Hubert Humphrey (23.7 per cent). Later, a Carter staff member, Greg Schneiders, described the Carter forces as having been "intimidated" and having found the New York scene before the primary "frightening." "Our strategy for April 6th was to somehow avoid disaster," said Carter's pollster, Patrick Caddell. However, in the next few weeks, when Carter's pursuit of the Democratic nomination began to seem "inexorable"—as he himself then described it (asked early in April if there was anything that could cause him to withdraw from the race, he said, "I can think of one—death")—local Democrats' recollection of their earlier distaste for the front-runner faded rapidly. There was also some later revisionism in the Carter camp. During the last few weeks before the election, it was at the instigation of the Carter forces that local Democratic leaders engaged in a systematic—and, this time, successful—effort to keep someone off the state ballot: former Senator Eugene McCarthy, who some feared would draw enough votes from Carter to give the state to Ford. (According to the *Times*, the President Ford Committee considered encouraging this result by contributing to the McCarthy campaign here and in other states, but couldn't figure out a secret conduit for such funds. "Maury Stans would have known how to do it," one of the Republican campaign officials said nostalgically.) And in the early-morning hours of November 3rd, after New York was finally assigned to the Democratic column, a jubilant Carter put in calls from Atlanta not only to Beame (who shortly after his 1973 election declared that all he was or ever hoped to be he owed to the Brooklyn Democratic machine) but also to Meade Esposito, Patrick Cunningham, and Donald Manes, who are the county leaders—bosses—of Brooklyn, the Bronx, and Queens.

THE recent portentous comings and goings at the President-elect's quarters in Plains and Atlanta reminded some local politician-watchers that the last time a new President got ready to take over after an eight-year reign by the opposition party the center of the action was the Hotel Pierre, in this city—Richard Nixon, as some have forgotten, being at that time a New York City resident. In that transition period, distinguished candidates for Presidential appointment, other politicians, and television crews approaching the room off the Pierre lobby where press conferences were held often had to fight their way through throngs of children in party clothes and white gloves who were on hand for Mr. John Barclay's dancing classes. Among the politicians who made it to the conference room for the announcement of their appointments as members of Richard Nixon's new White House staff was New York's present Democratic senator-elect, Daniel Patrick Moynihan. Moynihan's major opponent for the Democratic senatorial nomination this year, Manhattan Representative Bella Abzug, ran into trouble when, in a campaign commercial, she used a taped excerpt from his 1968 remarks in which he said he felt it an honor to be part of the new Nixon Administration, but introduced them as coming "from the Nixon White House" rather than from Nixon transition headquarters. Moynihan denounced the erroneously labelled commercial as "McCarthyism" and also called it "as dirty as any trick pulled by Nixon people," and Mrs. Abzug withdrew it. During the campaign, Moynihan, dropping a name that isn't dropped so often anymore, explained that before he accepted the 1968 Nixon offer he had told Senator Edward Kennedy about it and that Kennedy had made no objection. If Kennedy had protested, Moynihan said, he would have turned the job down. It seems likely that there will be more Kennedy name dropping here in the future. Senator Buckley, in a study of his defeat, reported that forty per cent of his vote in November came from Democrats—a figure suggesting that Moynihan's political ambidexterity also confused some of the voters this year. In a state where the Democratic margin in registration is nearly three to two, the establishment of strong Democratic associations can be useful, and Moynihan will probably continue to point out, as he did during the campaign, that the seat he has now won was that of Robert Kennedy, lost to the Democrats after Kennedy's murder, when Rockefeller, then Governor, appointed the Republican Charles Goodell in his place.

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There was some local amusement at the news from Georgia that the first appointment of the populist-oriented President-elect was Cyrus Vance, currently a Wall Street lawyer, whom Carter identified as being from West Virginia; while it is Vance's birthplace, he hasn't lived there full time for nearly forty years. However, Hamilton Jordan, of the Carter transition staff, indicated that he felt no great dismay over the number of people being considered for the new Administration who are based in this city. "Once people become successful," he said, they often move to New York, so "a disproportionate number of people we're looking for are from New York City." Jordan was not necessarily referring to the candidates being urged upon Carter by Governor Carey and Mayor Beame, who were exercising their prerogatives as a result of having delivered New York State. It has been noted that several of the names suggested by Beame are those of New Yorkers who, if they don't go to Washington, might be tempted instead to enter the race for mayor in next year's municipal election—including First Deputy Mayor John Zuccotti and Representative Abzug, who gave up her sure seat in the House to run for the Democratic senatorial nomination, which she lost to Moynihan by one percentage point.

Close elections seem to be the political style this year, and in another of these, which involved another transition—in this case, from the Ninety-fourth to the Ninety-fifth Congress—the city's fiscal crisis played an unexpected role. Seeming to have no chance in the four-way scramble for the job of Majority Leader in the new House, Representative Jim Wright, of Texas, wrote to the twenty-seven Democratic members of the New York delegation to remind them that in the fall of 1975 he had been one of only three members of the Texas delegation and one of only fifteen House members from the entire South and Southwest who had voted for the loan arrangement that rescued the city, and that, even though without it the city would have gone under financially, the measure had passed the House only by a vote of 213 to 203. "Which of the four contenders for Majority Leader is most likely to persuade some of those who voted 'no' to change their negative position? The question answers itself, doesn't it?" said Wright. A few days before the House election, on December 6th, Wright sent the New Yorkers another letter, in which he said, "Let's not talk about what you can do for me. . . . Maybe I can win without any help from New York, maybe not. I'd rather win with New York. Naturally." Although Wright's eventual victory by a single vote was the result of a secret ballot, two-thirds of New York's Democrats are said now to be in a position to call attention to ways in which the new House Majority Leader could be helpful in smoothing the path of legislation that would benefit their state and city.

THE reverse transitional movement that is now under way—the recessional as current Washington officeholders prepare to resume their places in private enterprise—has also, in some respects, been a plus for the city, and particularly the contemplated return to their natural Wall Street habitat of many of the financial figures in the Nixon-Ford regimes, among them William Seidman, White House economic adviser; Secretary of the Treasury Simon, whose duties have included doling out the federal loans to this city; and Assistant Treasury Secretary Robert Gerard, who was designated by Simon to keep a day-to-day watch on the city's compliance with the terms of the loan agreement. Part of any preparation for coming back to New York had to be an adjustment to the change in the traditional adversary relationship among the city's political, financial, and municipal-labor leaders which has evolved in the past year and a half as these three elements of New York public life have been forced into a working partnership in an all-out common effort to save the city from bankruptcy. The tone that Simon took toward New York in October of 1975, when in congressional testimony he declared that any federal remedy for the city's fiscal problems must be "so punitive, the overall experience be made so painful that no other city . . . would ever be tempted to go down the same road," would not be well received by active members of the new coalition, including those from the financial community with whom he would be working in the future. In recent months, the comments of Gerard, who in the past had displayed a detached attitude toward the city's painful retrenchment measures, have taken on a soothing tone, and at one meeting with city and state leaders he seemed to be establishing his credentials as a sympathetic collaborator by referring three times to the fact that he himself was a New Yorker. On November 19th, the state-legislated moratorium on one billion

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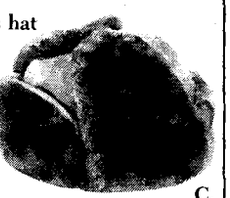

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dollars' worth of the city's short-term notes—a moratorium imposed in November of 1975 in order to satisfy Simon's and Ford's insistence that the city's debt must be restructured before they would support a federal loan program—was declared unconstitutional by the state's highest court, the Court of Appeals, thus apparently endangering the whole loan agreement. The word from Washington, however, was, in effect, to think nothing of it. Simon assured the city that the next installment of the loans would be forthcoming as usual, and Seidman congratulated the city on its courageous fiscal adjustments.

In the case of Simon, who has his primary residence in New Jersey and a weekend home in East Hampton, the new conciliatory tone as he was reported to be getting ready to return to his old job as senior partner in the investment firm of Salomon Brothers, in downtown New York, may also reflect an interest in establishing himself as a friend of New Yorkers for other reasons. Friends are said to be boosting his stock as the next chairman of the Republican National Committee and also urging him to run for the Republican Presidential nomination in 1980. A popular local game in the future could be measuring the extent of his ambition for the latter post by keeping track of how often he and his supporters identify him as—contrary to some assumptions—a Roman Catholic, which is an increasingly valuable political credit. (The Catholic representation in the new Congress, for example, is at its highest point in history.) An admirer of Simon as well as of Richard Nixon, Rabbi Baruch Korff, did the best he could along these lines in Kansas City last summer. At a private dinner in honor of the United States Citizens' Congress just before the Republican Convention, Korff urged all Convention delegates present to "add Bill Simon to the ticket as our next Vice-President of the United States," giving as one of Simon's credits the fact that, as Korff put it, "I spent one dinner evening in East Hampton with the Simons and I saw the family affection as they said the Stations of the Cross"—which, as the columnist Garry Wills later commented, is "surely an odd way to entertain dinner guests."

ALTHOUGH four years seems to be a very long lead time, the success of Carter's full-time pursuit of the Presidency for a period of nearly two years no doubt means that the next Presidential campaign could begin when the new Presidency is barely under way. In the city, for the moment, however, local politicians are busy congratulating themselves on having somehow managed to achieve a mutually advantageous political relationship with a President with whom they had once seemed to have almost nothing in common. The only other immersed Baptist whom most of them had encountered on the New York political scene was Nelson Rockefeller. Carter's remark that his children would be the sixth generation living on the same land ("a man with roots in a world of the rootless" is how someone has described him) was a reminder here of how comparatively recent are the migrations from other countries or from other regions of this country in the life stories of most New Yorkers—and perhaps especially New York politicians. (Of the candidates for the Democratic senatorial nomination this year, for example, only Bella Abzug, the daughter of Russian immigrants, has lived in the city all her life. Moynihan was born in Oklahoma and Ramsey Clark in Texas, while Abraham Hirschfeld arrived here from Poland by way of Israel, and Paul O'Dwyer came here from Ireland.) Even physically, the man who is now President-elect often seemed out of place in local political gatherings, and Mary McGrory's observation that at a dinner he attended with Italian-Americans in Washington he "looked like Raphael's portrait of an Englishman amid the swarthy faces and dark eyes" was equally true when he met with New Yorkers whose forebears are Italian—which, of course, he no longer pronounces "Eye-talian." A few weeks before the Democratic Convention, Carter remarked that he did not feel as comfortable among New Yorkers as he did among other politicians around the country.

In the months since, Carter has evidently come to feel more at ease with "the New York crazies," as some members of the city's congressional delegation and their friends back home are sometimes referred to in Washington. On the night after the Court of Appeals decision on the notes moratorium, which meant that New York would soon have to come up with nearly a billion dollars, possibly in cash, Carter picked up the phone in Plains and called Governor Carey. "I understand you have a problem up there," he said—an unsolicited expression of concern that raised local spirits. So far, the next President's actual commitments to the

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city have continued to be minimal, and it seems likely that at heart he still feels much as he did in October of 1975, when he said he did not favor a solution for New York which would seem to single it out for special consideration. This may be fortunate, since it apparently coincides with the sentiments of Congress, where special legislative remedies for New York may be slow in coming unless House Majority Leader Wright is very persuasive in his talks with his Texas friends. Probably the most that the city can hope for in the near future is a series of programs designed to help all troubled cities, among which New York will find itself first in line—but, at least, there will be urban programs in the new Administration, which could not have been elected without the big-city voters. New York will also benefit from programs to boost the declining economy of the Northeast—the only other region outside his native South that went substantially for Carter, and an area for which he expressed concern throughout the campaign.

In an attempt to establish compatibility with leading New York politicians last June, Carter spoke of the help that Franklin D. Roosevelt ("who had been your governor") had given people in the South, including his own family, during the Depression, and of his own desire, as President, to be "sensitive to the needs" of the troubled Northeast "as Franklin Roosevelt was when he changed my life." Carter has said that the enlargement of the job market is first on his list of economic remedies, and this is especially good news in the Northeast and in this city, where the unemployment rate is just under ten per cent. Those who need work or who know someone who needs work or who have come to be concerned about signs that the new President may be a prisoner of big business and the Pentagon would have been heartened by a speech that Carter made in Connecticut a few weeks before the election. Of the faces of men and women he had encountered in the Northeast "from all walks of life," he said, "many of them wear that look of alarm which some of us thought had passed with the end of the Great Depression. It is the haunted look of an American who wants to work but has lost the hope of finding a job." He added that "it is a look the Republicans do not see," and in the months to come people in this city will be watching the new Democratic President, hoping that he continues to see it and knows what to do about it.

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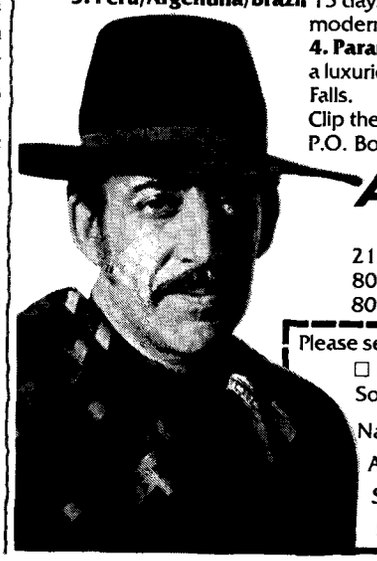

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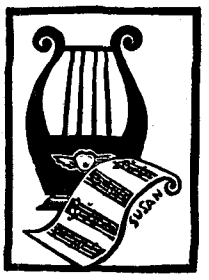
THE Boston Symphony performance of "Messiah" in Carnegie Hall, conducted by Colin Davis, was exhilarating. It was a "Messiah" in the modern manner—not by any means a historical reconstruction of an eighteenth-century performance but closer to that in spirit and in sound than were the massive "Messiah"s of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century. Many a long-familiar work, and perhaps "Messiah" most of all, has recently changed its character—or, more precisely, the assumed character under which, decade after decade, it appeared before audiences—as a result of musicological research, scholarly-minded criticism, and the wide dissemination, on phonograph records, of modern performances undertaken with the aim of re-creating as accurately as possible the sounds that a composer of the past would have expected to hear. Such records are already legion; to their number let me welcome the first release in this country of the German SEON series, published here on a new label, ABC Classics. A sample disc, CLS-67001, is enough in itself to justify the company's claim of "exemplary performances on period instruments." Listening to a Haydn string quartet done by such an ensemble as the Guarneri Quartet or the Quartetto Italiano, played with modern bows on instruments that, even if their bodies are old, probably have new necks, bass-bars, and bridges, and some metal strings screwed up to modern pitch—instruments that are tenser, louder, and more brilliant than those Haydn knew—can, of course, still be a profoundly moving experience. Yet why should anyone cross the road to hear such an ensemble play Haydn's Opus 20 Nos. 2 and 4 when he could stay at home and listen to those works played (on ABCL-67011, in the SEON series) by the Quartetto Esterházy, four very accomplished Dutch musicians who use the right instruments and have studied the techniques and musical style of Haydn's day? And who wants to hear Bach church cantatas with women's voices in the boys' parts and nineteenth- or twentieth-century instruments, possibly underrehearsed and ill-balanced as well, when the Alte Werk series of Bach cantata recordings can provide performances whose timbres and phrasing make most other accounts of those pieces, however accomplished, sound like transcriptions?



To those questions there is an easy answer: The pull of the live event is strong. I attend the Sunday-afternoon Bach cantata series in Holy Trinity Church, on Central Park West, not expecting anything on the Alte Werk level but because—quite apart from the illuminating "contextual" presentation of each cantata, heard along with a chorale prelude, psalm, lesson, and hymn related to it—assisting at a performance (the old phrase for attending seems apt) is something different from listening to one on records. Which proves more rewarding depends mainly on the level of the respective performances—but not only on that. Better a very fine recording than a very poorly executed live concert. Better good clear sound from loudspeakers than dry or muddled sound in acoustically unsatisfactory surroundings. Better to be alone and undistracted than seated near a chatterbox or a persistent cougher. Better to be at home under a lamp than in a darkened hall if following a printed score or text is likely to enhance one's enjoyment of the music. But the choice is not always so sharply defined. Admirable live performances, acoustically excellent and adequately lit halls, and attentive, congenial audiences exist. The presence of such an audience can make a difference to both listeners and performers. Walter Legge believes that, by and large, artists are able to scale greater interpretative and technical heights in the "ideal conditions" of a studio than on the public platform, and many of the records he produced in that belief bear him out. But perhaps not all. Under Legge's supervision, Maria Callas made two recordings of "Lucia di Lammermoor," in 1953 and 1959. Both are magnificent representations of her art. Yet if anyone asked me to demonstrate why Callas's Lucia was deemed great I would choose to play, first of all, the "live" performance in Berlin in 1955, conducted by Herbert von Karajan, which was captured and has been circulated on a "pirate" recording. Before the public, Callas is even more vivid and inspired, and she dares more. A similar comparison obtains between the two published albums of "The Ring" conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler. One was recorded in 1953, an act a day, for Italian radio, before only a small invited audience, the other during live performances of the cycle at La Scala, in 1950. Both are magnificent representations of Furtwängler's art. But the Scala version is the greater; a few coughs from the large audience and a few wrong entries are a small price to pay.

There are no rules about this matter. Some artists seem to need an audience to give of their best; others—Clifford Curzon and Glenn Gould come to mind—are happier in a recording studio. Nor, fortunately, are there mutually exclusive alternatives. One can hear Beverly Sills and Joan Sutherland "live" before an audience at La Scala (thanks to the "pirates") and "live" before an audience at the Met (thanks to Texaco), hear them in polished studio recordings—and, of course, also hear them really live, by going to the theatres where they sing. But when it comes to the eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century classics—Bach, Handel, Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, Schubert—then, since most performers stick to the modern instruments and methods on which they were trained, one usually has to turn to studio performances, on records, to hear the music played with historically accurate sound and style.

The Boston Symphony used modern instruments for its "Messiah," but in other ways the performance took heed of scholars' researches. The instrumental numbers employed were not very different from those of Handel's day. For a "Messiah" at the Foundling Hospital in 1754, Handel had fifteen violins, five violas, three cellos, and two double-basses; four oboes and four bassoons; pairs of horns and trumpets (the horns presumably doubled the trumpets in jubilant choruses, for there are no horn parts in the score); a drummer; and probably two continuo players. In Carnegie Hall, Davis had eighteen violins, eight violas, six cellos, and three double-basses; two oboes and two bassoons; two trumpets (no horns); a drummer; and two continuo players. By Handelian standards, the winds were understrength in relation to the strings, and they sounded so; in oboe/violin and bassoon/string-bass doublings, the oboes and bassoons were not very audible. But the sound was light, clear, and alert. Although it did not lack force in those numbers where force is called for, it never thickened. That the score used contained Handel's notes and did not contain Mozart's and Ebenezer Prout's additions to them can perhaps pass without comment in our day; not long ago Handel-

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Mozart-Prout was the norm and pure Handel the exception, but things have changed. Not *only* Handel's notes were heard, of course; that would be unstylish. There was a small amount of the unwritten variation and adornment of melodies expected once by eighteenth-century and now by nineteen-seventies ears. There was not quite enough for my taste—it came as a shock when the tenor soloist declined Handel's invitation to a cadenza in the eighth bar of "Comfort ye"—but too little ornament is preferable to too much. (Sir Adrian Boult once tartly suggested the publication of a Joan Sutherland record entitled "Mad Scenes from 'Messiah.'") Similarly with the harpsichord continuo: constant twiddles, cunning divisions, and ingenious imitations can become maddening, but Davis's player erred on the side of sedateness—if we can rely on Sir George Macfarren's recollection of Sir George Smart's recollection of Joah Bates's recollection of Handel's own continuo playing: "The harpsichord part of the songs was contrapuntal. It was not merely the filling up of the harmony, but improvisation . . . of an interesting florid contrapuntal part." One Victorian mannerism Davis retained: delaying the dominant-and-tonic cadence of a recitative until the voice has closed, instead of letting it clash in as the vocal phrase reaches its end. But the fact that Handel expected these cadences to be played more or less as he wrote them is a fairly recent assertion of scholarship. Respected editions of "Messiah"—J. M. Coopersmith's, Alfred Mann's, Watkins Shaw's, John Tobin's—all imply, by the placing of the notes on the page, the familiar timing of, for example, "a highway for our God . . . *plink-plonk*" rather than the crisp close that we are now told was Handel's intention. The bold authentic cadences would suit Davis's bold approach very well, and I imagine he will need little persuasion to adopt them.

At that Foundling Hospital performance, Handel had a choir of five or six trebles and thirteen lower voices. Davis had the Tanglewood Festival Chorus, sixty-five strong, with female sopranos and altos. Good boy sopranos are hard to come by today (St. Thomas, on Fifth Avenue, has them); women sopranos as accomplished as those of the Tanglewood Festival Chorus are a very acceptable substitute. Their tone was fresh, light, and even. Following the first violins, they touched an easy high C (which boys find hard to compass) toward the end of "He trusted in God." The note is unwritten but makes better musical sense than the repeated Gs of the autograph: Handel kept the compass down only by docking the fugue subject of its true climax. The choir was excellent in all its departments—balanced; fluent and distinct but not mannered in runs; buoyant in rhythms; athletic, incisive in entries; clear in diction. It was natural, unexaggerated in all it did.

In 1754, Handel divided the songs among five soloists, and in 1758 among six. Davis used four. Susan Davenny Wyner, the soprano, seemed nervous. Her timbre was limpid, but her phrasing and intonation were often insecure. Florence Quivar, the alto, was arrestingly unpredictable. I suppose her sudden register switches and the sudden changes of style, even in mid-phrase, should be deplored, but I found them oddly attractive—especially by contrast with the blandness of so many "Messiah" contraltos. When Miss Quivar cried "Arise, shine," the imperatives rang out so incisively that people sat up in astonishment. There was a touch of blandness about Neil Rosenshein, the tenor. He was lyrical; his voice and his phrasing were cultivated; but he seemed so evidently on his best behavior. John Shirley-Quirk, veteran of many "Messiah"s, brought unflagging ardor, nobility, and energy to the bass songs.

In his "Handel's Dramatic Oratorios and Masques," Winton Dean quotes with approval some sentences from Robert Manson Myers' "Handel's Messiah, a Touchstone of Taste":

> When composing the Hallelujah Chorus he "did think" he "did see" God seated on His throne, just as when he composed "Semele" he probably imagined

"And this pen is for you, Rumford. Merry Christmas! Next letter, Miss Carson."

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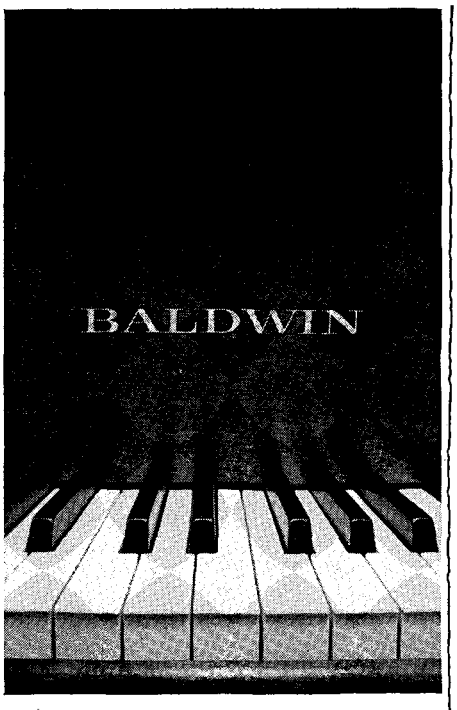

David
Bar-Illan's
Accompanist

he saw Jupiter on his throne, and the fact only proves his intense imaginative powers and his relative freedom from the genuinely devotional mood. . . . As an operatic composer Handel sought never to reveal his own personality, but always to depict some object or to render some dramatic scene. Never did he cling with greater resolution to this laudable intention than in "Messiah." Never therefore did he compose a work more fundamentally secular in spirit.

Devout people were shocked when "Messiah" was first put on at Covent Garden, in 1743. The Victorians made the work respectable by performing it in a piously devout—and un-Handelian—manner. There may have been some in Carnegie Hall who were shocked by Davis's secular, undevout—and thoroughly Handelian—approach. Much of the work danced along, not skittishly, not irreverently, but with that uninhibited and quite unmystical joy which is never long absent from Handel's music: even amid the Passion choruses of Part II—which were sung with tender, humane feeling—those irresistibly high-spirited sheep come capering on, plainly delighted to have gone astray. In this performance which had so much variety of mood, the grandeur and glory of the big choruses shone more brightly than ever. Ten years ago, Davis recorded a "Messiah" for Philips, in much the same spirit. Nine years ago, Charles Mackerras made a recording for Angel, also with modern instruments but with a tangier reed-string balance and greater boldness in melodic adornment. I would not be without either set; nor would I have missed assisting, in the flesh, at this "Messiah" in Carnegie Hall, and sharing in happiness that seemed to flow from the platform and fill the hall.

—Andrew Porter

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Fayetteville—Evangelist Billy Graham told 6,000 Baptist State Convention messengers gathered in the Cumberland County Memorial Auditorium Wednesday that their prayers were needed for President-elect Jimmy Carter, who "will face the most pressing problems in American history."

Taking his message from the 18th chapter of Genesis, Graham said, "There is nothing too hard for the Lord to accomplish" and Carter, a born-against Baptist, "can take comfort in that."

—*Durham (N.C.) Morning Herald.*

Yeah, but can the Baptists?

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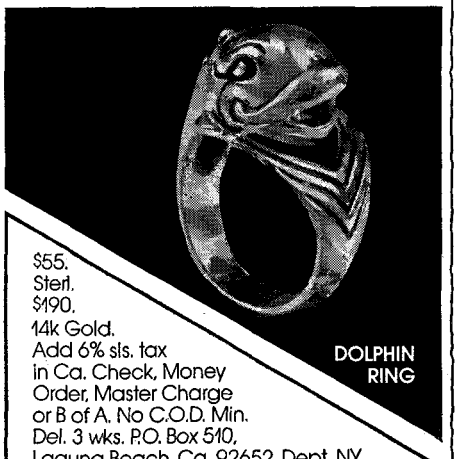
The first complete sentence was spoken over the telephone on March 10, 1876.

—*Concord (N. H.) Monitor.*

A husky voice said, "You have the wrong number."



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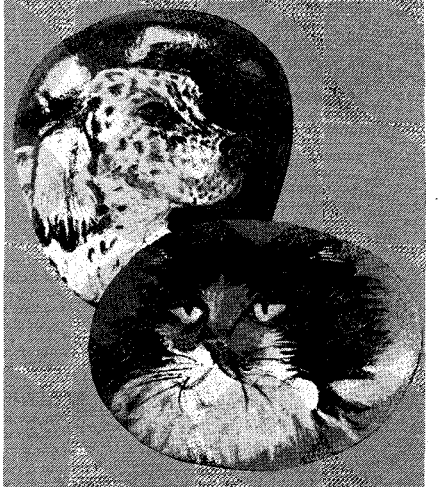

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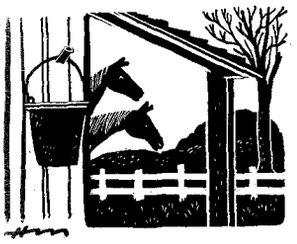
THE RACE TRACK

A Glance Back

RACEGOERS will say goodbye to the present season with few regrets. There has been no end of disappointments. I thought of this as I read the results of the polling for the Eclipse Awards and for Horse of the Year, conducted jointly by the *Daily Racing Form*, the National Turf Writers Association, and the Thoroughbred Racing Associations. Then it came to me that things were not so bad after all.



We had Forego, who has just been voted Horse of the Year for the third time. I've been going racing for years, but I can't recall when any other horse ran four spectacular finishes one after another, all under high weights, as Forego did last summer. Many observers, including Mrs. Martha Gerry, who owns him, say that his best race all season was in the Marlboro Cup, when he carried the unusually high weight of 137 pounds. Two furlongs out, he was sixth—lengths behind the leaders. Then, in the run down the stretch, it seemed that he did the distance in nothing flat to beat Honest Pleasure—to whom he gave eighteen pounds—by a head. I'll string along with that. As you probably know, Forego isn't the soundest horse in the world—he has leg trouble—but Frank Whiteley did a great job with him this year. It is hoped that if he winters well Mrs. Gerry will race him next season. After all, he will be only seven. Kelso ran at nine.

This was no vintage year for three-year-olds. To be sure, Bold Forbes won the Kentucky Derby and the Belmont Stakes, and E. Rodriguez Tizol, the Puerto Rican banker who owned him then, gets the Eclipse Award. I think Láz Barrera, who trains Bold Forbes, should get one, too—and split it with Cordero, who galloped him mornings and rode him in races in the afternoon. One of the disappointments was Bertram Firestone's Honest Pleasure, 1975's top two-year-old. After the Blue Grass Stakes at Keeneland in April, he didn't win again—though he tried several times—until he took the Travers in August. His best effort was in setting a headlong pace in the Marlboro Cup, until Forego ran him down. Of course, Bill Perry's Revidere was the best three-year-old of all—filly or colt. After she beat all the other three-year-old fillies, Perry ran her against older fillies and mares in the Beldame Stakes, and Proud Delta beat her. Then he ran her against the boys in the Jockey Club Gold Cup, and she finished third to Great Contractor and Appassionato. Of course, Mrs. Marian du Pont Scott's Proud Delta received the Eclipse Award for best of the older fillies and mares, and Nelson Bunker Hunt's Youth was voted best on the grass—which he certainly was, though on this side of the Atlantic he ran only twice, at Woodbine and Laurel. Mrs. Ogden Phipps had the best jumper in Straight and True.

BEST by six lengths of the Christmas horse books that have come to this department is "Thoroughbreds of 1976," by Edward L. Bowen ($45), published by the Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association. In the foreword, Alfred Vanderbilt writes that beginning forty years ago Sagamore Press (he *was* Sagamore Press) published annually a volume called "American Racehorses." For several years, Joe Palmer, the best racing correspondent I've ever known, wrote it. After his death, Joe Estes carried on for a while. I never knew why it folded. "Thoroughbreds of 1976" is a revival. Mr. Bowen, managing editor of *The Blood-Horse*, tells you all about the ten leading three-year-olds, the ten best older horses, and the ten best two-year-olds, in the best *Blood-Horse* tradition. The book is beautifully turned out, and has scores of excellent photographs in color. If your bookseller doesn't have it, write to *The Blood-Horse*, P.O. Box 4038, Lexington, Kentucky 40504.

Colonel Martingale joins me in wishing you three hundred and sixty-five lucky days. —AUDAX MINOR

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CLEAR DAYS ON CAPITOL HILL

[*From a newsletter from Representative John Burton, of California*]

SBA BILL

A new bill to aid dairy ranchers was signed June 3 by President Ford. The bill, which I co-sponsored, will provide funds for ranchers through the Small Business Administration to help them beat pollution control standards. Earlier attempts to aid farmers through the Farmer's Home Administration have been found wanting.

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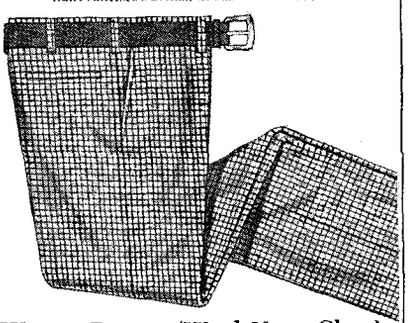

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BOOKS

Of Beauty and Consternation

IT is a rare thing for the living to collect and publish their letters; as E. B. White says, with his unfailing crispness, in a prefatory note to "Letters of E. B. White" (Harper & Row), "ideally, a book of letters should be published posthumously. The advantages are obvious: the editor enjoys a free hand, and the author enjoys a perfect hiding place—the grave, where he is impervious to embarrassments and beyond the reach of libel." The advantages of pre-posthumous publication are obvious also: the living epistolist can supply his editor, in this case Dorothy Lobrano Guth, with leads and clarifications; he can write, as White has done, delightful introductory and interstitial paragraphs; he can help shape the collection of letters toward its ideal condition, of involuntary autobiography. White's refining touch is felt throughout this well-designed, considerately annotated volume—six hundred and sixty-two pages' and sixty-eight years' worth of prose treasure strewn along the wayside by a diffident-appearing but at heart highly determined literary pilgrim.

Mrs. Guth's introduction states that when a collection of his letters was suggested to White by one of his editors at Harper & Row, he "wrote back that he didn't really consider himself much of a letter writer." In a letter to his brother Stanley in 1968, White said, "I avoid writing letters—it resembles too closely writing itself, and gives me a headache." Yet, once settled to the typewriter, he is a generous communicant, devoting, for example, nearly a thousand exquisitely chosen words to a librarian who petulantly mailed back a letter White had written to a little girl explaining how overwhelmed by mail he was and suggesting that the child form a movement called "Don't write to E. B. White until he produces another book." White's mail, indeed, swollen by all those adults and children who feel that in his work he has addressed them personally, must be as voluminous as a movie star's, and only an extravagantly decent man would answer as much as he seems to. In this collection one can find, recovered from their recipients by heaven knows what miracles of retrieval, perfect examples of the types of letter an author is called upon to write: to the term-paper writer ("Dear Mr. Cole: I don't know how to 'reveal any aspect' of myself deliberately. Everything a person does or says is, of course, revealing. But *you're* going to write that term paper, not me"); to the random inquirer ("Dear Miss Gravely: I don't know where to begin. I am five feet eight inches tall—but that's an odd place to begin. I am fifty years old—but that's a dreadful place to begin. I ate too much for lunch—but nobody would want to begin *there*. As for my work, the only thing I can tell you about it is that a lot of it has been published, all of it was hard, and some of it was fun"); to the proposer of a deal ("Dear Miss Strauss: . . . Your proposal is certainly challenging enough for anybody. It had never occurred to me that the life of Christ could be a subject for a comic book—probably because it doesn't seem funny. Now that I have adjusted to the idea, I still don't want to undertake it, as it is primarily a labor of adaptation, rather than of creation, and I'm not a very adaptable man"). White's letter of January 14, 1948, to E. J. McDonald is a consummate specimen of the Apology to a Friend Who May Have Been Offended by a Story (here the ungratefully received narrative was a masterpiece, "Death of a Pig"), and his communication of June 6, 1950, to James Thurber a model of the Letter to a Friend Who Has Sent His Book ("The Thirteen Clocks," and White manages to disguise as pleasantries a number of shrewd criticisms). Refusals to lecture, to comment on galleys, to name three favorite books of the year—there is no piece of professional fending so mechanical that White begrudges its phrasing a pinch of grace and fun. His responses to children who are baffled by the ending of "Stuart Little" or the meaning of "Charlotte's Web" are marvels of affectionate patience. At guileless length he defends himself against the charge, by "some students of children's literature," that there was too much money and violence in "The Trumpet of the Swan." His gingerly relationships, fond yet sometimes fiercely firm, with publishers and editors weave a pretty pattern as White steers one book after another around his own doubts and the helpful interferences of others. His correspondence, in 1971 and 1972, with the makers of the unfortunate film of "Charlotte's Web" constitutes a heartbreaking outpour of justified anxieties and ignored advice. His letter to Katharine White, his wife, in June of 1948 describes drolly and harrowingly another authorial peril, the honorary degree—even the hood proves a menace: "I guess it must have been when I reached over to pick the program off the chair that my hood got hung up on Ben Ames Williams. Anyway, when I got seated the thing was up over my face, as in falconry." His letter to William Maxwell of November 16th that same year, worrying about the foreign translations of "Stuart Little"—"I'm not enough of a linguist to know whether a Dutch Stuart Little should be called Stuart Little or Tom Trikkelbout. But it is beginning to dawn on me that I damn well better find out"—stands as a rebuke to those authors who imagine that their responsibilities are confined to the language they write in. White has taken his citizenship in the community of letters seriously; whenever he has felt freedom of expression threatened, whether by McCarthyism in the fifties or by the Xerox Corporation's sponsorship of an *Esquire* article this year, he has spoken up, and his public letters, written gratuitously to newspapers, are among the more impressive extensions of his vocation. Even in indignation he twinkles: "I can only assume that your editorial writer, in a hurry to get home for Thanksgiving, tripped over the First Amendment and thought it was the office cat."

A remarkable trio of letters from December of 1936 shows White's ethical sense, and his generous epistolary nature, thrice activated by the same affront: Alexander Woollcott had lent himself to a Christmas promotion of Seagram's whiskey. Woollcott's bulk-mailed solicitation for Seagram's as a Christmas present was reprinted in *The New Yorker's* Open-Letters Department, with a mordant response signed "Eustace Tilley" but composed by White, which concluded, ". . . this Christmas of 1936, thanks to your thoughtful note, has been given an unforgettable flavor, has become a season pervaded with the faint, exquisite perfume of well-rotted holly berries." In a personal Christmas card to Woollcott, White continues in the same saucy style, referring quite uncontritely to his published jape at "your open affair with La Seagram. After all, a man's personal excesses are his own business. Privately, I may wish you joy

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of the lady, but publicly I must give so lewd an alliance a jab, mustn't I?" The third letter, at great length, and with a courtesy as total as its frankness, carefully explains the abuse of trust that White sees in the older writer's commercial involvement:

My other reason is the one that everything really hangs on: the importance of a writer's maintaining his amateur standing.... I still cling (by my teeth these days) to the notion that writing is a trust.... The next time I come across you, in the mail, in print, I feel I must be on my guard, must see what the catch is, may have to read half way through before I can determine whether this is an affiliated utterance or an unaffiliated utterance.

White's own determination to remain amateur and unaffiliated is reflected in his affectionate, respectful, yet edgy correspondence with Harold Ross. White's value to the young *New Yorker* was estimated by James Thurber for *The Saturday Review* in 1938: "Harold Ross and Katharine Angell, his literary editor, were not slow to perceive that here were the perfect eye and ear, the authentic voice and accent for their struggling magazine.... His contributions to the Talk of the Town, particularly his Notes and Comment on the first page, struck the shining note that Ross had dreamed of striking." Yet the shining-note producer's early notes to the persistent dreamer are gruff and wary and often mailed from afar, like this one from Ontario in 1929:

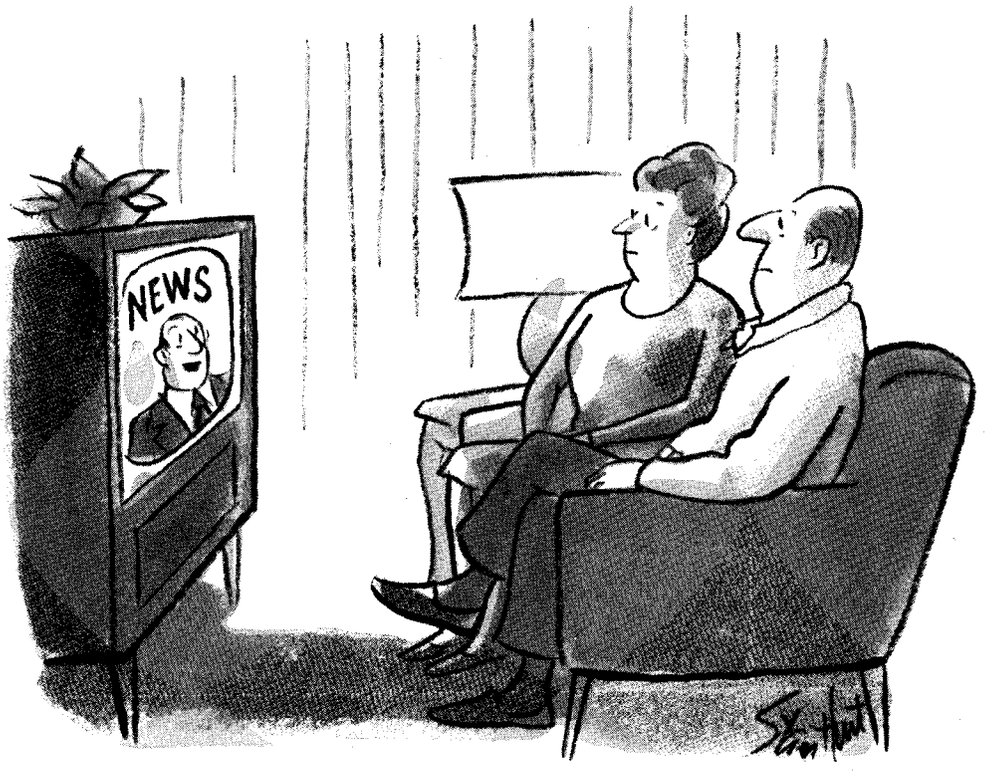
On account of the fact that *The New Yorker* has a tendency to make me morose and surly, the farther I stay away the better. I appreciate very much your extraordinary capacity to endure, and in fact cope with, my somewhat vengeful attitude about *The New Yorker* and my crafty habit of slipping away for long intervals... Next to yourself and maybe one or two others, I probably have as tender a feeling for your magazine as anybody. For me it isn't a complete life, though.

The search for the complete life took him out of New York City entirely from 1938 to 1942 and from 1957 to the present, and to Maine every summer from 1930 on: "I would really rather feel bad in Maine than good anywhere else." While remaining a supremely prized contributor, visible and invisible, to *The New Yorker*, and identified in the public mind with what is best and blithest about it, White has often asserted his unaffiliated talent elsewhere; his fame in large part rests upon his three best-selling novels for children, the essays of the "One Man's Meat" column he wrote for five years in *Harper's*, his surprising revival and revision of an old Cornell professor's handbook of English grammar and usage ("The Elements of Style," by William Strunk, Jr.), and an essay done at *Holiday's* behest, "Here Is New York." "If I had no responsibilities or obligations of a domestic sort, I would most certainly arrange my life so that I was not obliged to write anything at any specified time for anybody," White wrote Ross in 1939, after he had taken on the *Harper's* commitment; though he has felt editorial pressure and constraints (and quit "One Man's Meat" when its writing seemed only "to fulfill a promise, or continuing obligation") he has not passed this feeling on to his readers. His readers, instead, feel flattered by the directness of his prose and caught up in its playfulness as his apparently unconstrained utterances gracefully poke toward the light. His quintessentially American style aspires to the very texture of freedom, the unfussy smoothness of something growing. "Many of the things he writes seem to me as lovely as a tree," Thurber wrote in 1938. This quality, of arboreal self-shaping, was not unearned; White struggled to keep it, to keep his distance from whatever would claim him and crowd him, even his beloved and hardworking wife, to whom he wrote in 1937 in explanation of a year's holiday he proposed to take from magazine work,

A person afflicted with poetic longings of one sort or another searches for a kind of intellectual and spiritual privacy in which to indulge his strange excesses. To achieve this sort of privacy—this aerial suspension of the lyrical spirit—he does not necessarily have to wrench himself away, physically, from everybody and everything in his life... but he *does* have to forswear certain easy rituals, such as earning a living and running the world's errands.

Most of these letters scarcely touch on literary matters. He mentions reading Santayana and Thoreau, and writes John Kieran a fan letter for his "Natural History of New York City." He several times casts a skeptical sibling eye in the direction of Hemingway, a fellow-lover of the outdoors and clean prose, and with easier fraternity confides some of his professional acumen and ambition to Thurber, Frank Sullivan, and Howard Cushman. Cushman, a Cornell friend who drove with White across the country in 1922, lived to act as his Philadelphia legman in the research for "The Trumpet of the Swan," and never quite dropped from correspondence in between. "Sweet Hum," White addresses him, and signs himself "Ho." Thurber, in those years before (in White's obituary phrase) "blindness hit him, before fame hit him," offered himself as a partner to White's sensibility, and received letters unique, among these many, in their tone of frank, urbane, wised-up ennui:

Sunday afternoons are about the same as when you left, people walking their dog out, and the dog not doing anything, the sky grey and terrible, and the L making the noise that you hear when you are under ether... Even when an artist has the ability and the strength to assemble something of the beauty and the consternation which he feels, he is usually so jealous of other artists that he has no time for pure expression. Today with



"Good evening, you sitting ducks."

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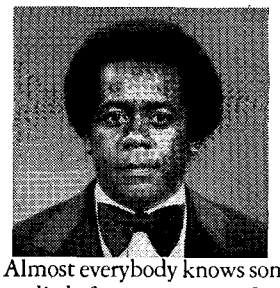
"How many people do you know who have been cured of cancer?"
Flip Wilson,
National Crusade Chairman



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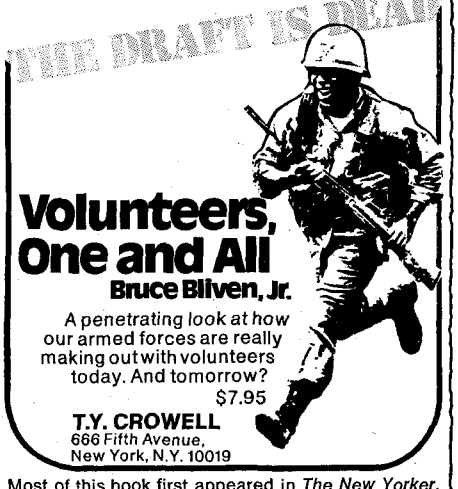
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Most of this book first appeared in *The New Yorker*.

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the radio yammering at you and the movies turning all human emotions into cup custard, the going is tough. Or I find it tough.

This letter also holds one of the few glimpses through White's eyes of the New York literary scene: "Joe Sayre is back from the Vineyard with third act trouble. . . . Walter Lippmann and Mrs. Lippmann are getting a divorce." White deliberately snubbed the cosmopolitan he could have become, and his later letters tend to confirm his diagnosis of himself as "not a bookish fellow." But what a busy fellow! The launching ground of these missives is crammed with poultry and livestock, with goslings White has helped to hatch ("as green as grass, and they immediately begin playing their flutes, an enchanting sound") and with trout he is helping to spawn, with hurricanes and early risings, sailing and shingling, orphaned robins and willful dogs, and chores, chores, chores. Any impression that his retreat to rural life had an evasive or ironical side should be dispelled by these letters. White is a doer, a maker.

Practically the most satisfying thing on earth (specially after fifteen years of trying to put English sentences together against time) is to be able to square off a board of dry white pine, saw to the line (allowing for the thickness of the pencil point) and have the thing fit perfectly.

In 1943, he "produced 14 lambs, 5 pigs, and 272 chicks and 5 goslings in spite of the weather" and expressed willingness to take on Louis Bromfield in a farming duel, "he to choose the weapons—anything from dung forks to post-hole diggers or 2-ounce syringes for worming sheep." Nor is this willingness to tackle anything a late offshoot; in his trip West with Cushman, White, by his own account in letters home, repaired their Model T, sold pocket calculators, picked pears, sandpapered a dance floor in Cody, Wyoming, played the piano in Hardin, Montana, and, in Louisville, Kentucky, wrote a sonnet on a race horse and sold it on the spot. White is so handy, so faithfully amused by his transactions with the material world, that his writing comes to us as largesse. The fine words have been trickled through a sieve of natural busyness. Another screen on the sieve has been his physical frailty, an unsteadiness in the head and a queasiness in the stomach that seem always there, or around the corner of the next ominous hour (though, surprisingly, he shows no nervousness in high places; at Cornell he tried to walk across the Fall Creek gorge on the handrail of a bridge, and as a Talk of the Town reporter he ascended the unfinished Chrysler Building by ladder and scaffold). In 1936, he wrote Christopher Morley, "My health is always whimsical, and I turn out shockingly little work in the course of a week."

His attitude toward his own writing is volatile. Against the discouragement he expressed to Thurber may be set the happiness of his statement to Stanley White in 1929 that "to write a piece and sell it to a magazine is as near a simple life as shining up a pushcart full of apples and vending them to passersby." To Ross, who found in White's shined apples the shining note he was looking for, White wrote in 1945, "I am not as sure of myself as I used to be, and write rather timidly, staring at each word as it comes out, and wondering what is wrong with *it*." To a college student he wrote in 1963, "I was a writing fool when I was eleven years old and have been tapering off ever since." Yet, for all his protests of fragile gifts progressively enfeebled, the sustained energy and charm of these letters, dashed off from odd corners of crowded days, confirm our impression of a writing fool still, irrepressibly felicitous and fluent. As early as his Western trip of 1922 he was coining sentences as impishly lyrical as "Wild roses lined the road timidly all of the way" and with surreal precision saying that a small town "consists mainly of four stores and an excellent view of the mountains." His letters to his brother Stanley, who taught him to read before first grade, trace the longest curve in the book, and make the most deliberate accounting. Stanley, a landscape architect, lived in Illinois and has retired to Colorado, and White's periodic letters record the writer's life with the caringness of a family album, and a sepia touch of "the literary":

> The lake hangs clear and still at dawn, and the sound of a cowbell comes softly from a faraway woodlot. In the shallows along shore the pebbles and driftwood show clear and smooth on bottom, and black water bugs dart, spreading a wake and a shadow. A fish rises quickly in the lily pads with a little plop, and a broad ring widens to eternity.

Of countless precious verbal moments in this wealth of communications, I especially treasured, in praise of a cane, "It gives dignity, direction, restraint, and a general sense of owning whatever you set the point of the cane down on," and, in memory of Robert Coates, "Bob shining like a great red lantern over everybody and everything, with his mind darting about like a swallow in air."

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Well, one expects to find gems in Tiffany's. This collection, addressed to many people, will speak to many more. The index is excellent, and the photographs, of snowy, grassy yesteryears, are haunting. White was born in a castle and works in a boathouse, and both are shown. Young or old, he has parted his hair next to the middle. This is his biggest book—the only one, indeed, hard to hold with one hand—and, as he says, his most naked. "A man who publishes his letters becomes a nudist—nothing shields him from the world's gaze except his bare skin." In 1964, he described an essayist as one "who must take his trousers off without showing his genitals. (I got my training in the upper berths of Pullman cars long ago.)" His drawers here are not altogether off, as we can see by the polka dots of ellipsis that intervene sometimes; nevertheless White has allowed some tart thoughts to slip into print: "The firm of Harper, I have discovered over a period of years which might roughly be described as too long, is feeble-minded, but it is the sort of feeble-mindedness which holds a man in thrall." We laugh, and even his publisher must be disarmed by the aptness of expression. White's style, in the manner of the eighteenth-century journalist-philosophers and of Thoreau, seeks the finality of aphorism. Aphorisms compress truths so they can be lifted out and carried in the mind, like pebbles in a pocket. Here are ten, for your Christmas stocking:

A man who skates on thin ice shouldn't carry bundles.

A writer is like a beanplant—he has his little day, and then gets stringy.

There is some slight advantage in living as a recluse, in that one makes one's own crises, instead of getting them out of the newspaper.

I don't know which is more discouraging, literature or chickens.

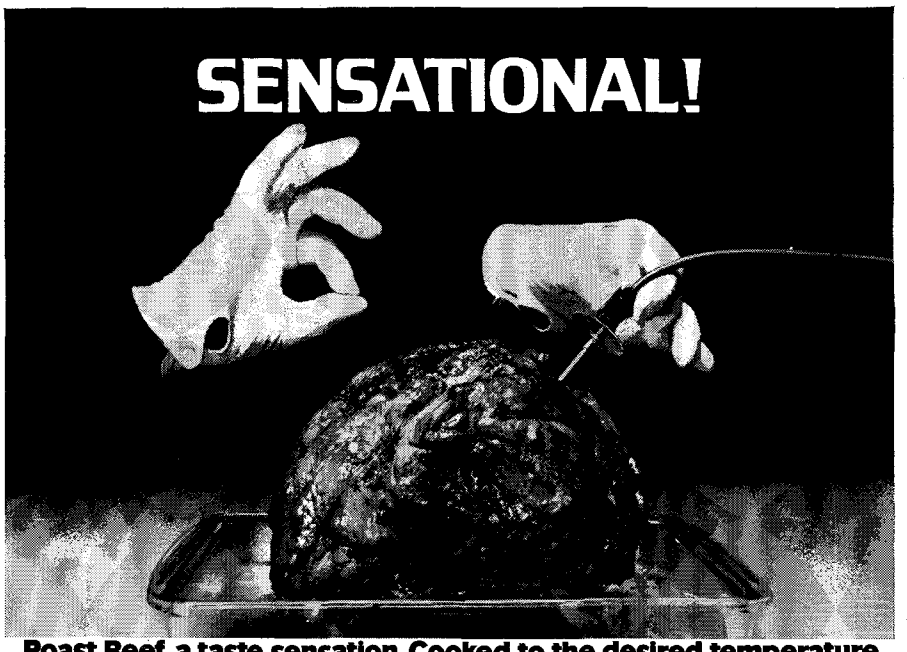
Medals should be edible, so you could get it over with and have a moment of enjoyment.

I always write a thing first and think about it afterward, which is not a bad procedure, because the easiest way to have consecutive thoughts is to start putting them down.

It is always sobering to encounter the intellectual idealists at work, for they seem to live in a realm of their own, making their plans for the world in much the same way that any common tyrant does.

I find that not one person in a thousand can conceive of Man as a species that faces extinction.

As long as there is one upright man, as long as there is one compassionate



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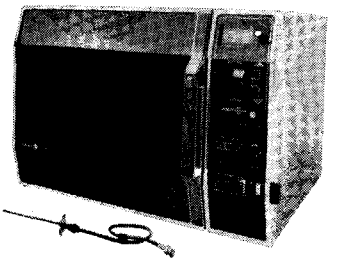

GENERAL ELECTRIC

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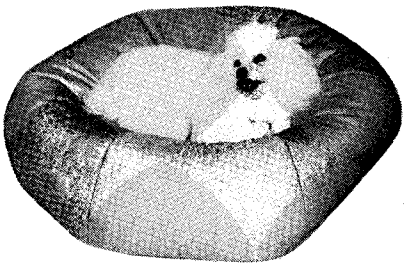

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woman, the contagion may spread and the scene is not desolate.

When I get sick of what men do, I have only to walk a few steps in another direction to see what spiders do.

—JOHN UPDIKE

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

A CLEAR ROAD TO ARCHANGEL, by Geoffrey Rose (St. Martin's). An adventure novel about a young English spy caught up in the Russian Revolution. It is subtitled "A Story of Escape in 1917," and it reads as if it had been written at about that time. This is not a depreciation. It is hard to know Mr. Rose's intentions, but the result—with its classic coincidences, its vivid close calls, its contrasting moments of hunger and shivering and of champagne and red plush opulence, the unswerving patriotism and Buchanesque insouciance of the narrator, its armored trains and guerrilla cavalry—is an authentically silly period piece, and one with much appeal. And the subtitle—the idea of having a subtitle—is a confirming touch.

GENERAL

CHRISTOPHER AND HIS KIND, 1929-1939, by Christopher Isherwood (Farrar, Straus & Giroux). This segment of autobiography covers Christopher Isherwood's life from his arrival in Berlin in 1929, through his four years in that city and his later travels in Europe and elsewhere, to his debarkation in New York in 1939. During that decade, he was becoming known as one of England's most innovative writers, yet his unorthodox sexual preferences had to be concealed and disguised. Now that writing openly of sexual love between men is more widely accepted, he can speak of the affairs that evidently meant the most to him at the time, and he does so with delicacy and wit. No psychological secrets are bared; the feelings are ones that any "straight" will recognize, and Isherwood's deepest relationship—with a German youth named Heinz—was, in fact, "absurdly like [that of] the most ordinary happily married heterosexual couple." The author ("I") looks on his past persona ("Christopher") from a position of amused superiority. Affection also enlivens his portraits of W. H. Auden, Gerald Hamilton, John and Beatrix Lehmann, E. M. Forster, William Plomer, and Christopher's other friends. The models for a few well-known fictional characters, such as Sally Bowles, are described, and contrasted with what the author made from them. The public events of the thirties—so important to the writings of Isherwood and Auden—rather recede into the background. The best moments are those in which the stream of facts suddenly slows and forms a deft sketch of a person or a state of mind.

CLIMBING IN NORTH AMERICA, by Chris Jones (University of California Press). Mr. Jones, a well-known climber, has written a delightful and informative history of climbing on this continent. The book is full of surprises. For example, the first climb of Mount McKinley, the highest mountain in North America, was made in 1910 by four Alaskan miners who had never climbed a mountain before and never did again. They had no special equipment except for an American flag and a heavy flagpole, which they carried to the top to prove that they had been there. The climbers that Jones describes are wonderful eccentrics and are often very funny. In the words of Eric Beck, a modern Yosemite climber, "At either end of the social spectrum there lies a leisure class." The illustrations in the book will convince most readers that, leisure class or no, climbing at this level is a pretty rugged affair.

THE SWAMP, by Bill Thomas (Norton). A splendid illustrated celebration of the sometimes eerie phenomenon of nature from which all terrestrial life emerged. Mr. Thomas examines swamps in general and, at first hand, some eighteen important American swamps, among them Great Dismal Swamp, the Okefenokee, the Big Thicket, the Everglades, Mingo Swamp, the Atchafalaya. He reminds us that swamps are not only (to those with eyes to see) beautiful (and perhaps the truest remaining examples of real wilderness) but also of supreme material value: as fish and wildfowl nurseries, as natural vehicles of flood control, and (as science is belatedly recognizing) as a matchless means of recovering pure water from sewage. He warns us that the swamp is an endangered species, and makes it only too clear that if the forces of indomitable ignorance continue to have their way, and the last swamp is drained or indifferently destroyed, it will be (as Chief Seattle wrote to Franklin Pierce in 1855) "the end of living and the beginning of survival." The illustrations—all photographs and all in full color—are the work of the author. Nineteen dollars and ninety-five cents.

THE LOST WORLD OF THE IMPRESSIONISTS, by Alice Bellony-Rewald (New York Graphic Society). Although the Impressionist painters professed little interest in the subject matter of their pictures—maintaining that the way the light fell on, or enveloped, the physical world was all that mattered—an ever-growing public, ironically, responds to their art simply for its evocation of a now vanished world: the humble farm, the steam train, the horse-drawn vehicles, the quietly decorous, bourgeois interiors. The author of this sumptuous volume evokes the milieu in which the leading Impressionist artists—Monet, Sisley, Pissarro, Manet, Renoir, Cézanne, Berthe Morisot—lived and worked, and illustrates her text with photographs of the painters at different times in their lives, of their families and friends, of their houses and villages, of the places they went to play, and, of course, of their pictures. A delightful book. Nearly three hundred illustrations, forty-eight in color. Thirty-two dollars and fifty cents.

•

MOST DELICATELY BALANCED NATIVITY SCENE OF THE MONTH

[*Directions that came with a little Christmas scene from East Germany—shepherds, lambs, etc., circling the stable*]

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR PIRAMIDS

1. Each piramid set up or hang up always vertical and never press strongly the propeller on the shaft of the piramid, otherwise the little glass-basin in which the needle turns could be demaged.

2. The blades of the propeller must be put in the nave so that they stand in an angle of 30-45 graduation. If the piramid runs too swift, the blades set a few steeper.

3. For little piramids the candles must be short, the flame never may reach directly in the nearness of the propeller. The piramid runs better provided that candles are far off the propeller.

4. The most important part for a good function is the glass-basin and here is to seek as a rule the mistake, when a piramid does not function. The glass-basin must be exchanged when it has a rent or after some years a deepening in the glass. We or the Importer always keep ready one new glass-basin against a little compensation of one postage.

5. To sponsor a good function it is commendable to give a drop of good oil and to prevent from gather rust on all parts of metal, especially on the nib of the shaft.

6. When at the end of the festival days the piramid will be put away, please let not stand the nib on the glass-basin during eleven month, but put under a piece of fluted cardboard between socle and rotating part.

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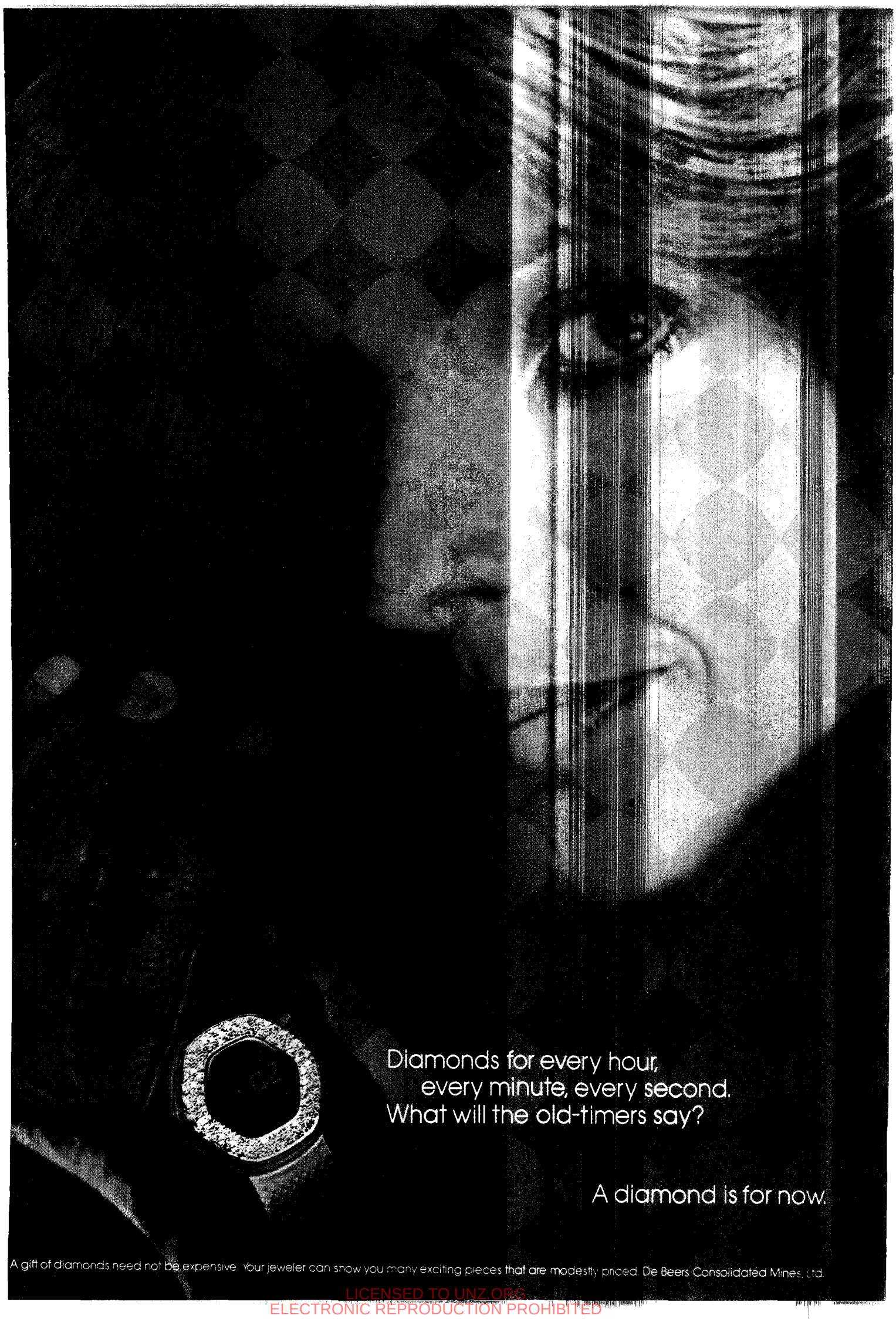
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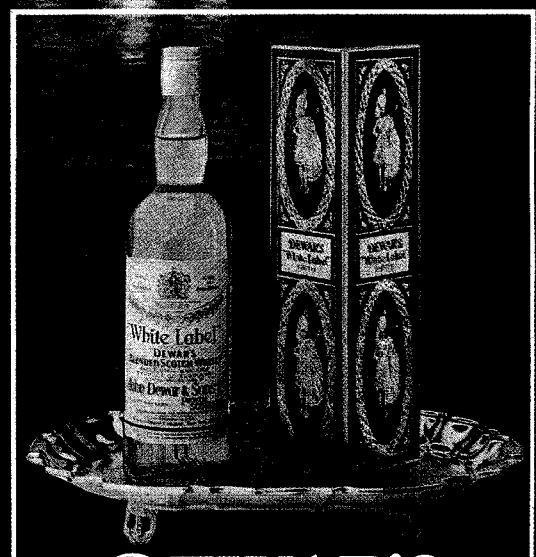

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